Virginia RECORD

July 1966

CLIFFORD DOWDEY'S VIRGINIA

A Collection of Editorials & Essays

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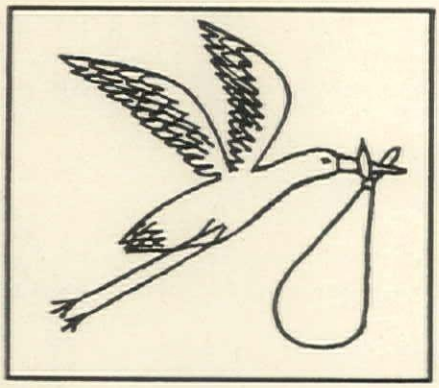
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VOLUME LXXXVIII JULY 1966 PRICE 50¢ NUMBER SEVEN

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FAREWELL AND HAIL

by

Clifford Dowdey

There used to be a joke-line among professional writers that went: "And then I wrote. . . ." This referred to those precious young people who, with very little in print, liked to regale anyone who would listen with the history of their writing "careers." A friend of mine, with whom I had worked on pictures at Metro, flew East for the christening of my oldest daughter. He was a hard-bitten pro, with dozens of screen credits, dozens of appearances in *Collier's* and the *Post,* and a book or so; and at a large post-christening party he approached me with pretended shock. "I am aghast," he said, "to have met in your house a 'And then I wrote.' More than that, *I* was the party this 'author' talked *at.*"

"What did you do?"

"Oh, I played it straight—wide-eyed admiration and mouth open—and I asked innocently, 'Do you get your plots or characters first?' "

Then my friend asked me seriously, "Do you *ever* like to talk about your old work?"

"No, and I'm always embarrassed for an answer when anybody asks me which of my books is my favorite. I think that, with obvious exceptions—like when you know you don't have it but are forced to fill a contract or something written 'on order' frankly for quick money—every book is your favorite when you are writing it. When you look back, what you're seeing are periods of your life, and I think there is some self-consciousness about seeing the self you once were nakedly exposed in print. That is, you did the best you could at that period and there's something like shock in looking at the limitations of that 'best.' "

"I know," he said, "there's a particular shock in looking at the attitudes that represented a 'you' that is gone. It's a ghost. I think the reason that pro's don't play the 'and then I wrote' game is because they don't want to be reminded of these ghosts."

I had not thought of that conversation until I read articles in the VIRGINIA RECORD written between five and ten years ago. For those no longer young, a period from five to ten years ago would not seem a span of life from which an individual felt any profound difference; it would not seem to be a period haunted by the ghosts of dead lives. As a matter of fact, I felt I had not experienced any significant changes in terms of an individual. Yet, these articles did belong in another age. Only, instead of representing an age in the sense of the stages of a personal journey, they represented the attitudes of another historical era.

We offer an album issue of VIRGINIA RECORD—a collection of editorials and essays by our editor, historian Clifford Dowdey. Aptly named "Poet Laureate of the South" by Ripon College at the ceremony awarding him the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters, Mr. Dowdey writes of his native Virginia in each issue of the RECORD.

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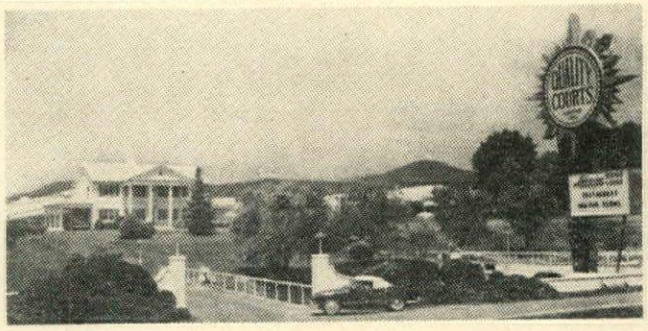
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Farewell

These articles represented an attitude which *assumed* a flow of Virginia's past into a living present, forming a stream of continuity in which those alive could participate in the currents of Time. Of course, we recognized threats to this continuum from the rapid and fundamental changes affecting all societies of the Western World under the impact of technological revolution and new ideologies of government. But these articles were written with the assumption that the *ethos* which had been perpetuated in the pattern of Virginia life would, with modification in detail, be adaptable to the changing world.

Looking back from here on the attitude in which this assumption was made, it is apparent now that the casual conviction was to some extent caused by a nostalgia that was far more personal with me than I realized. I had grown up in a time of what might be called "The Confederate *Experience.*" This experience was by no means limited to the four years spanned by the Civil War. It was an experience of a past time which lived with *immediacy* in the present. And this past time, which was a living part of the present, also extended backward into a time that, while more distant, was not isolated and remote — not "historic" in the sense of facts in books.

The very roads of Virginia then seemed to run across time and, just beyond one's vision, the roads were peopled by travelers conjured up from the imagination. There was an exciting play of the imagination in which you could almost expect to encounter around the next curve a carriage from Colonial days, in which ladies wore brightly colored silk masks to protect the whiteness of their skins and gentlemen wore wigs that seemed to give a heavy impassivity to their expressions.



In comparisons with roads in other states, I understand that those roads of the romantic evocations were very bad as thoroughfares of travel: they made Virginia seem backward and unprogressive. By standards of efficient means of transportation, I suppose our roads did not seem exactly "mainstreamish." But the point here is their contribution to the tangible immediacy with which the past was brought into the present. It must be remembered that in those days the word "mainstream" was fortunately not in general usage and, happily innocent of our benightedness, the important thing to us was the seemingly unchanging countryside that served as a visual impression of a continuous past. The countryside, observed from the unworthy roads (perfectly suited for horse and carriage), itself confirmed the *experience* of the confluence of the past and present.

This immediate sense of reality of the past could be termed "The Confederate Experience" because, ultimately, the conditioning—

(Continued on page 29)

and Hail

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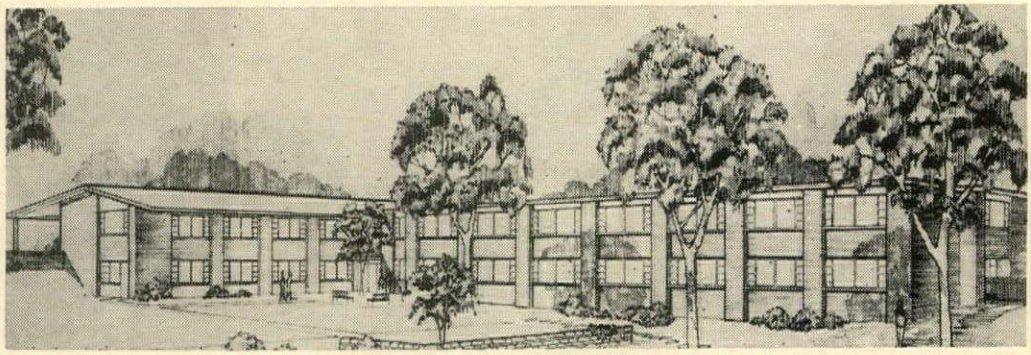
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What Was Jamestown?

(From March, 1957)

At the 350th anniversary of the founding of America at Jamestown, it might be well to look inside the confused impression that has grown through the centuries since around myth and sentiment, distortions of truth and forgotten facts. Every passing fashion in historical interpretation presumed to explain in a single neat theory *the* reason for the British colonization in Virginia, and every age offered a different background for the British people who risked and, in the early days, mostly lost their lives in the founding of the colony.

In romantic eras, all the colonists were represented as being high-born gallants who were called "cavaliers." In periods which strived for more realism, the colonists were described as fugitives from the London slums, rogues and thieves, with nary a single gentleman of noble birth who left decendants on the hot frontier. Neither representation is close to the whole truth, though each contains that one germ of truth which a theorist can blow up to prove his point.

Actually, the appellation of "cavalier" was a political term of derision that applied to the adherents of the Stuart monarchy; but everybody who followed kings was not one himself. Also, since the cavaliers did not come to Virginia until around the 1650's, they could not truly be considered amongst the founders of the colony—not in the sense that Jamestown implies "the beginning."

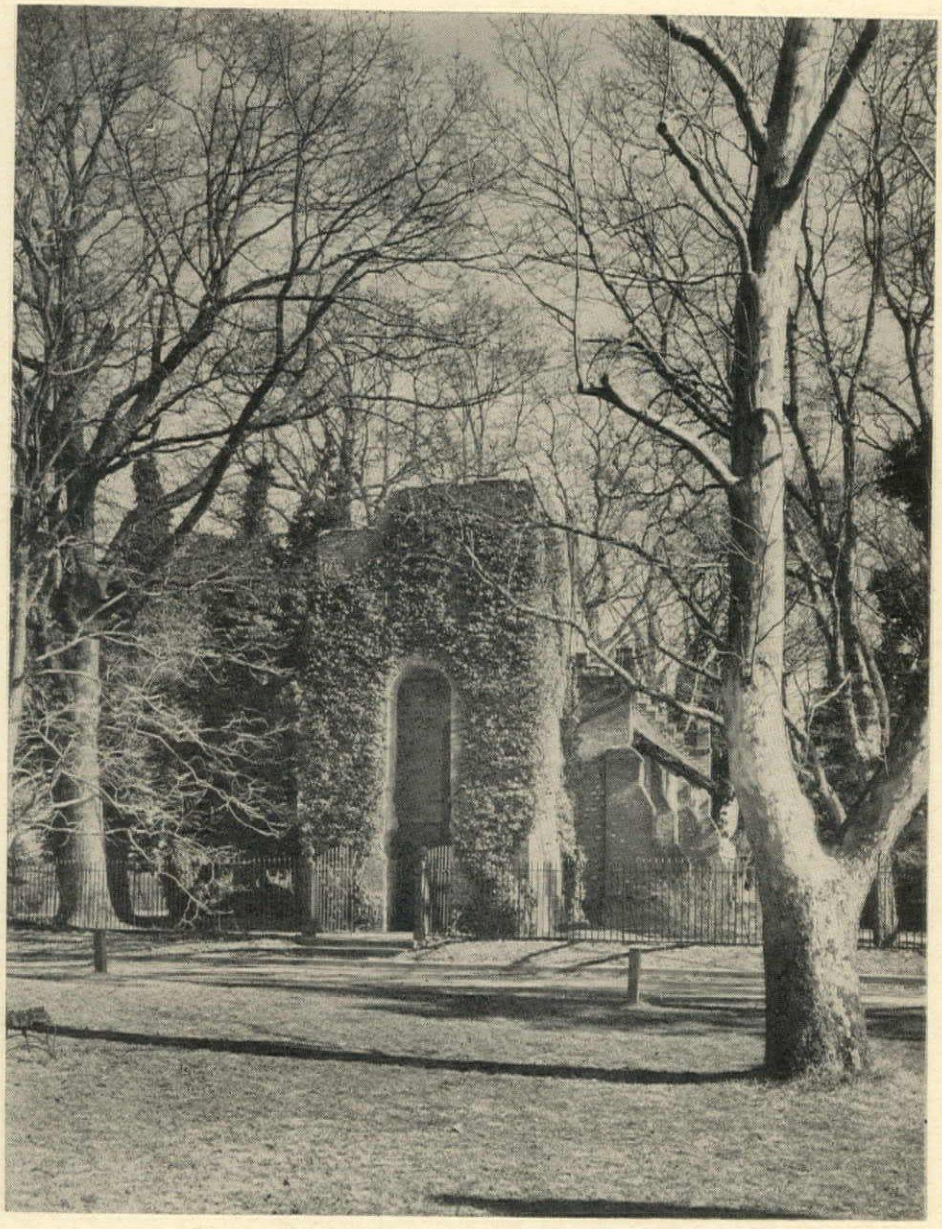
The influence of the cavalier on Virginia was considerable — in manners, graciousness in living, and, most of all, in the concept that would reproduce the baronial pattern of the British country gentry in the newly discovered wilderness. In their influence, the cavaliers provided the model for and the impetus toward the final character of the life that emerged *from* Jamestown, rather than that which began at the settling of the three-mile island.

Yet, that germ of truth about the cavaliers, in the social sense in which it is usually used, exists through two factors: there *were* some very gallant and well-born young gentlemen in the first waves that came to the island in the tidal river, and the mental attitude established in that first, struggling little colony made the society receptive to the fashions and the ideals of the cavaliers who later fixed the mould of Virginia's character.

At the other extreme, the theory that denied any gentility to the men and women who came in the first years is a further stretching of the truth. While it is reasonable to assume that noblemen would scarcely abandon castles to make residence in a swampy wilderness, it does not follow that all the untitled colonists were the debased denizens of English urban-life.

Far more of these first pioneers came from cities than from farms, but many were skilled artisans, others were of the clerical class, and some were moderately well-to-do and thoroughly responsible citizens. However, there *were* some unsavory individuals, and many more became vicious, anti-social characters under the brutally harsh conditions of life. Few of these survived, none rose to positions of influence, and as a group they contributed nothing to the character of the colony.

As for those in the early days with actual jail-records, it must be recalled that in England debtors were imprisoned. One of the really fine men who came, William Tracy, of position



Above, the Old Church at Jamestown.



(Va. State Chamber of Commerce)

The famous "first three ships"—the Susan Constant, Godspeed and Discovery.

and accomplishment, was jailed in Bristol for debts run up while his family and four maid-servants exhausted their cash in the long delay before their boat sailed.

The truly hardened criminals who came to the Colony later were undesirables which England foisted off on the colonies against the bitterest opposition of Virginia's colonial government. Virginia finally drained them off by arranging a law which "drafted" them into England's conscript-armies. During their riotous sojourn in Virginia, this criminal element caused real trouble, but in no way contributed to the Colony's character. Nor did they come in sufficient numbers during the colonizing period of early Jamestown to be considered a real element in the structure of that first colony.

Then, Virginians themselves added their own confusion to the impression of the early days by what might be called the "younger son" theory. By this, in roughly a single generation, armies of the younger sons of titled families all decided to venture to the raw continent and found lines for later genealogical-minded Virginians.

Most of the Virginians who wanted to descend from younger sons could have saved themselves a lot of trouble by reading a little, a very little, history. In the first 15 years of the little colony's struggle to maintain the barest foothold on the vast frontier, more than 80% of the people who made the adventure perished without leaving descendants. Of the most familiar names associated with glory in the early days, not one of their ancestors came to the Colony before 1622. The majority began to come 50 years after the founding of Jamestown. In the actual founding period, when the frontier was won, from 1607 to 1622, the few survivors of those harsh years who left descendants were well recorded and represented a fair cross section of the first emigrants.

They were people of more or less substance. They had the money to buy shares in the Virginia Company (which assured their passage); they had the intelligence and education for the extremely high adaptability required of the frontier; they had the sturdiness of character which the wilderness demanded for sheer survival. Of all things, they had ambition. In England their branch of family might well derive (as some by record did) from branches of either titled or untitled families of country gentry, but they were certainly no part of "younger son going to the Colonies." Startling though the idea might be, by fact younger sons usually went into trade, since older sons inherited the land.



Statue of Captain John Smith overlooking the river at Jamestown.

(Va. State Chamber of Commerce)

The fact of the first-born inheriting the ancestral seat did not turn all his brothers and sisters into wastrels and adventurers: the idea is absurd.

The people who came to our shores essentially wanted "a new start" in a new land because of the poor conditions, like a Depression, at home. England at the time was caught in the post-feudal lag before heavy industrialization, and times were hard. A few baronial masters owned all the best land, pay was poor for skilled artisans, materials were growing scant for ship-building, thousands of miserable wretches huddled in filth and disease in the cities, and, in a word, opportunities were very few for resourceful men of ambition and for what an historian called "that restless, pushing human material."

Of the very poor who came, few survived and none rose to prominence: they lacked the physical stamina and moral background. Of the gilded bucks who came as "Gent." even fewer survived. They were looking for easy fortunes, for the new Eldorado, and were in nowise equipped for the pitiless struggle. Of the upwards of 1,000 who, by 1662, had survived all hazards of hunger and homesickness, malaria and Indians, the bulk of those who were to complete the foundation from which the Colony grew, and to leave descendants to grow up as "Virginians," were variants of that core of substantial people who gave the Colony its character in the formative stage.

In that formative stage, the men had not yet come who were to conceive of the unlimited power that could be derived from plantations and of a ruling-class, an aristocracy if you like, that could be built upon that power. In the early days land-holdings were small, and riches were acquired by speculation in land and indenturers, and by trading with the Indians.

But those first who came, and mostly died, were not concerned with great wealth nor the appurtenances of "conspicuous consumption" that accompanied it. The concern of the *settlers* of Jamestown (as distinguished from those who came after the Colony was established) was primary survival. It was in their sheer survival that these heroic people established the first foothold of the British empire, and it was as England's first empire-builders that these hardy souls incidentally founded the nation that was to separate from the Mother Country and develop its unique and unparalleled power.

Only 105 men came in the first wave in May, 350 years ago. So little were

(Continued on page 38)

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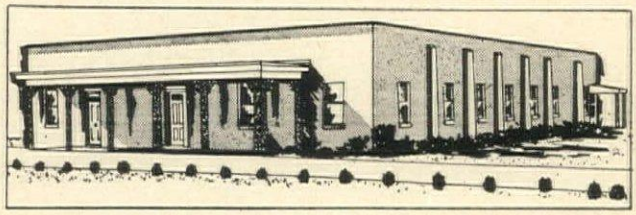
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THE VIRGINIA FARMER — FROM JAMESTOWN TO TOMORROW

(FROM APRIL, 1957)

THE EXTREMELY informative article by Mr. Wessells in this issue makes the heartening point of Virginia's modernization of its agriculture, with special emphasis on the adaptation to new trends, new conditions, new demands.

The Virginia farmer (as with all Southern farmers) suffered more disruption through the Civil War and its aftermath than any other national economic group experienced from any single cause, and for generations primary survival required a concentration that caused our farmers to appear somewhat backward—or, at the least, non-progressive — in comparison with other fields and other sections.

Yet, during the appearance of comparative backwardness, the farmer was making his own sizable contribution to the perpetuation of the Virginia character and economic pattern.

Back in the early parts of this century, when country cousins were called "green," and were supposedly naive bumpkins in contrast to urban sophisticates, their homes on farms provided one of the deepest and most poignant impressions on visitors from the cities; and the lasting memories from these visits contributed incalculably to a sense of perpetuation of a pattern of life then entering its fourth century.

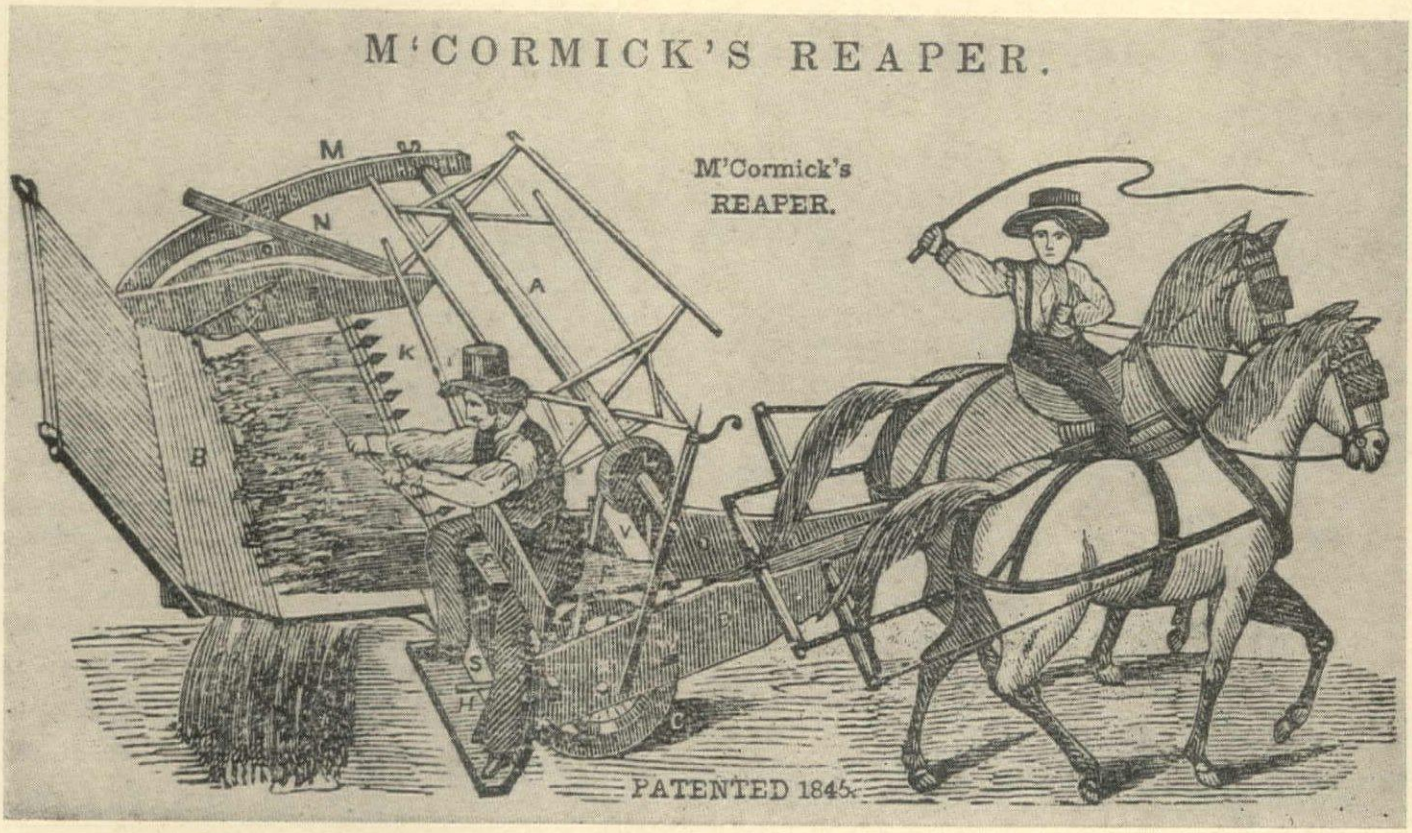
There are few Virginians born before World War I who were so unfortunate as not to have experienced these summer visits. You went in a surry or buggy from a wooden depot over a rutted dirt road, with the sound of wheels crunching in the gravelly earth and the hot fragrance of vines and fields and shadowed woods. As Cervantes said, "The road is more important than the inn"—or, the journey more important than the destination—the ride behind a sturdily trotting horse was in itself an event to be savored, and it never entered anyone's mind that he should look at a watch to discover if sufficient speed was being made so as to reach the destination, in oblivion to the trip, on a pre-arranged schedule evolved from x miles in x hours.

Railroads ran on schedules (more or less), not people.

Then, the final approach to the white frame house sprawling in a shady grove represented not an achievement in the conquest of space, at which you would slowly evolve relaxation from the tensions of the drive, but a climax to the mounting, almost unbearable, anticipation. No strangers ushered you toward the reviving balm of a hot bath, cold shower, and long drink. Warm-faced intimates greeted you in the expectation that you had reached the climactic hour where the hosts and guests could scarcely wait to begin the enjoyment of the reunion.

Then, as the journey had been savored, the visitor began what seemed an endless period of experiencing new wonders. Of course, viewed from perspective, the wonders were very simple.

There was the well from which to draw up the icy water, and there was the buttermilk cooled in the well; there was the limitless feast of fried chicken for mid-day dinner and six o'clock supper, and at breakfast came the country sausage—preceded by half an orange, a bowl of oatmeal, and ac-



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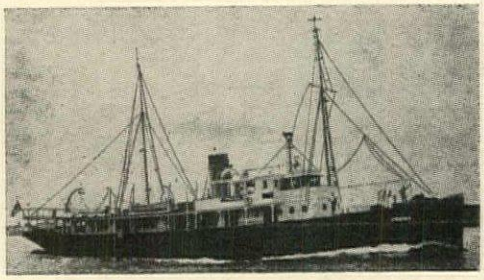


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NORFOLK – NEWPORT NEWS

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Pendleton, Virginia

companied by eggs, fried tomatoes, home-fried potatoes, and batter-bread or cornpones.

There was the tangy smell of the barn and the privilege of being allowed to help harness Dobbin, or even to essay some bareback riding. A turn at milking Bossy came at the end of the day, after a try at sprinkling grain for chickens. Peaches, apples and pears were picked from the trees, grapes from the vine, and watermelons brought in from the fields to be sliced open on a wooden trestle in the back of the house. There was a creek to swim in, with the interlude built into an adventure by the hazards of moccasins, and there was of all things the timelessness of the daylight hours—as a day is to a little child.

Looking back, we know that all these wonders to a child from the city were an everyday affair to the farm families, rather sternly fashioned by economics. Chicken was plenteous and sausage served bounteously because hogs and chickens were cheap to raise; fruit cost nothing from trees on acres worth no more than $25, and cornbread was abundantly served because it was made from the easily grown corn, and the family was too poor to buy wheat-bread (though the old-timers did regard "bakers's bread" with the most profound disgust).

Yet, allowing for the appearance of bounty in a manner of living that was extremely difficult to sustain—so difficult that each year saw a migration to the cities of defeated families—those people were making, for their times on earth and the knowledge at their disposal, a really noble adaptation in pertetuating what had been the basis of Virginia's economy and culture.

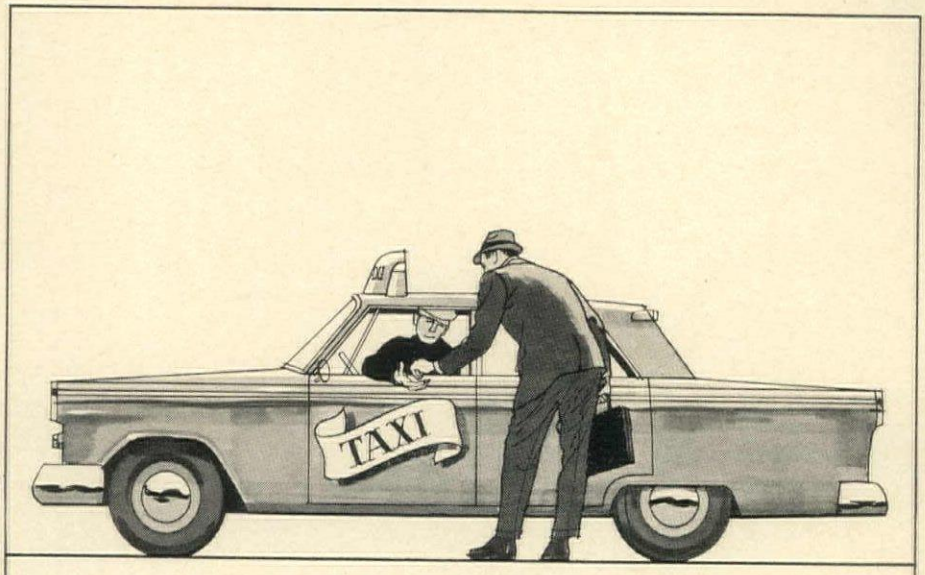
This economy, and its accompanying culture, began before Jamestown and the surrounding holdings were even safe from Indians. It began in 1614 when a gentle-mannered, middle-aged man, who had come to the raw colony as clerk of the council, and lost his daughter on the way over and his wife on arrival, filled in his lonely hours by experimenting with the raw Indian tobacco—much as today a suburbanite, home from work in the city, experiments in his garden. Hanging his black coat on a tree, this gentleman, in fleeing his loneliness, came upon a tobacco-leaf on which the Virginia economy was founded and which still is (with all the mutations of time) the largest earner percentage-wise of Virginia crops.

John Rolfe is known in history primarily as the husband of the Indian maiden, Pocahontas, who lived three years only after her marriage and whose one son became (if all descendants of Pocahontas are to be believed) the Adam of the continent. But it is not from this sad romance of a 50-year-old widower and a teen-age savage that Virginia was formed. It was formed on what the Council's clerk did with his spare time.

Because Britishers adventured to Jamestown fundamentally to extend the life of the landed gentry at home, the land was always the thing. It is a mighty humble Virginian who will not claim, through some line, descent from a landed family—and most of them are justified in the claim.

From the days when *all* Virginians were descended (in their more or less honest beliefs) from plantations—that "befoh de wah we had plenty of slaves"—to the more cynically eyed view of the past from today, we have witnessed a change from nostalgia to derogation.

Last week, an expatriate Virginian came back for a few days for the purposes of writing for Northern consumption on his homeplace, and he, in his modern viewpoint, wished to believe that all plantations and/or farms had been pretty sorry affairs outside the bracket of the 1% of huge establishments. *(Continued on page 52)*



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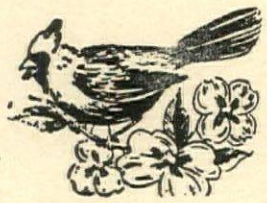
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The Carolinian
on the ocean
at Nags Head, N. C.



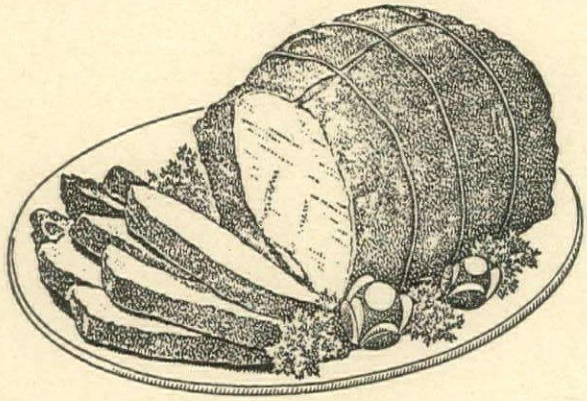
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Historic Fort Monroe

(From May, 1958)

The man who revolutionized warfare is totally unknown to history; in fact, he made his invention before recorded history. He invented a wooden spear.

This was the first weapon that could be projected at an enemy. From this projectile to the atom bomb, every new weapon was merely a technological extension of the basic principle of striking an enemy at a greater distance and with greater force than he could strike you. The arrow flew farther than the spear, the bullet farther than the arrow; with dynamite, high explosives struck more destructively than the largest bullet (cannonball) and the new bombs spread destruction on a scale still vaster.

As the weapons changed, new methods were introduced to give the weapon-throwers mobility and range. Genghis Khan conquered his part of the earth by introducing mounted weapon-men, cavalry, and England once dominated a large part of the globe by the perfection of its warships that followed the sea lanes. In our century, the land and seas were spanned by a machine that flew, transporting men and weapons through the air, and now comes a weapon that itself flies through the air, spanning continents.

Yet, the basic principle remains unchanged. After hurling the deadliest weapons, the attackers must seize, hold, and occupy the ground. On this principle, defenders have always sought to fortify themselves on their own ground. From the days of one family's cave to the times of a war-lord's moated castle and a community's walled city, efforts have been made at some version of the fort.

Today, when the conquest of space gives weapons a new mobility, with more wide-spread destructiveness, the concept of fort expands to embrace an entire continent. But, though the defense of the continental fort has a complexity expressive of the times, the principle is still to provide a citadel in which the defenders may be sustained with the necessities of life—food, water, shelter, medical care—in order to repel an invader from their soil.

It is little known in the state, or outside it, that Virginia has in Fort Monroe the only fort in the country in which every stage of the development of war has been represented from 1609 to 1958—from bows and arrows to the inter-continental missile, from a rude stockade to the complex modern version of a walled city, a continent.

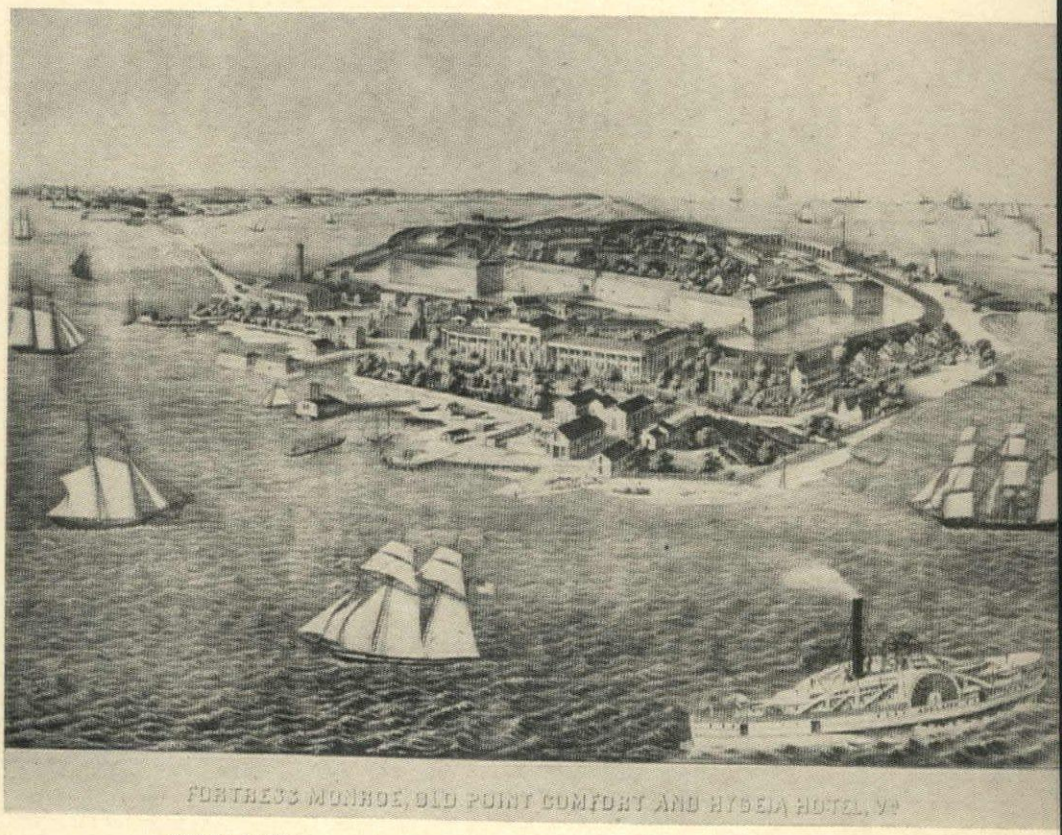
The oldest fort or garrison in continuous operation in the United States (1823), on the site of the first fortification of English-speaking people on this continent (Fort Algernourne, 1609), today Fort Monroe is the headquarters of the Continental Army of the U.S. —the Army's Combat Development Experimentation Center. This is the major army headquarters outside the Pentagon, and the "brains" are so high-level that generals are more commonplace than colonels and private soldiers are a rarity.

In modern warfare, continental defense is inter-related with far-reaching offense in one single concept of inter-continental war. At Fort Monroe, the scientists of war are not involved directly with global strategy, but all of their experiments with plans and weapons are related to the total operation of the tri-service system (army, navy, air force).

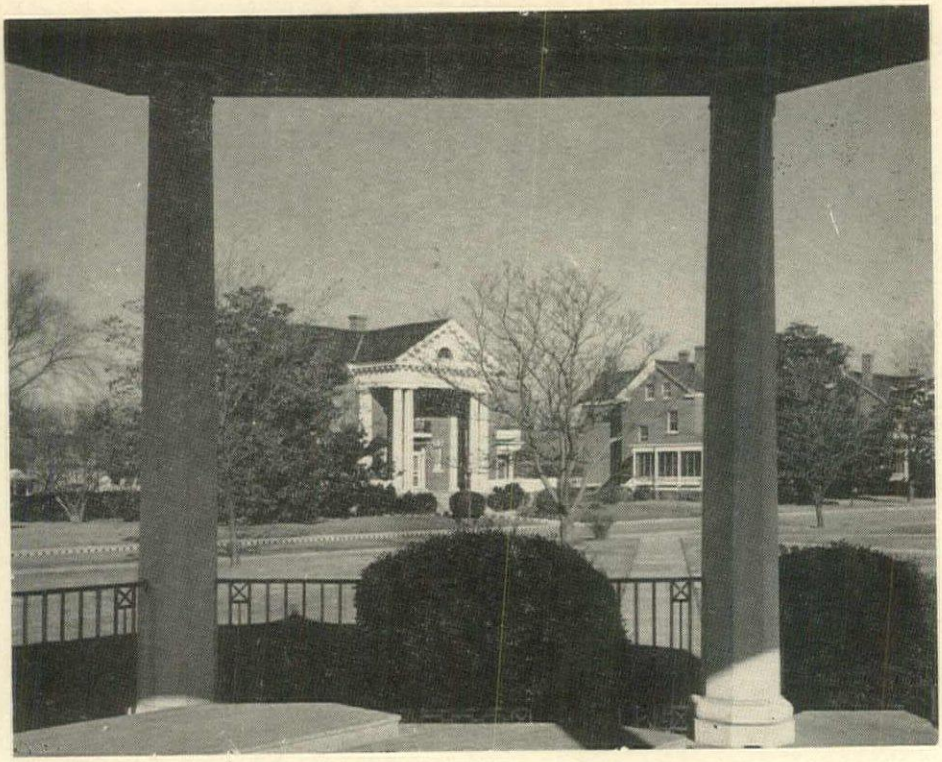
For any one who has viewed on TV an imaginary scene of our defense against inter-continental missiles, the complexities of strategy designed at Fort Monroe will come as some surprise. On TV, a cool operator in a glass-enclosed room talks in a laconic voice into his mike, "Oscar, 2 over," buttons are pressed from Canada to Mexico and, *voila,* the missile vanishes.

Oddly enough, it is this button-pushing notion of offense and defense that is old-fashioned, as well as quite unrealistic, and brings a wan smile to the officers at Fort Monroe. For, even if battles are fought simultaneously in Siberia and Detroit—and even on the moon—and missiles sail through the air like autumn leaves, the ultimate test of seizing and holding ground will

(Please turn the page)



FORTRESS MONROE, OLD POINT COMFORT AND HYGEIA HOTEL, Va



COMMANDING GENERAL'S QUARTERS

be decided by men and weapons in their hands *on the ground.*

While weapon-bearing men will probably themselves be whisked through space in some contrivance out of a bad dream, they will still be following the basic principle of Genghis Khan as stated by a later-day cavalry leader, the Confederacy's Nathan Bedford Forrest: "Get there first with the most men." Rockets are faster than horses, and fission-bombs more destructive than lead bullets, but when each side possesses the same weapons and the same means of mobility, it is only the styles that have changed and not the principle.

QUARTERS NO. 1 CONSTRUCTED IN 1819



At Fort Monroe, the military architects of our future security say that their surroundings are very helpful in maintaining an awareness of the basic principle, for certainly no site in the United States could serve as such a constant reminder of the continuity of the changeless principles of warfare through all the changing styles. In fact, the interweaving line of Fort Monroe in the country's history of warfare is almost incredible. At every phase of the changing methods, the site of America's first fort against Indians has represented not only the typical warfare of the times but *the most advanced.* The fort's history, indeed, is a history of the evolution of modern war.

The site of the fort's crude precursor, Fort Algernourne, was selected as an outpost for Jamestown with a view of commanding the water approaches that led into the struggling colony. On the tip of the Peninsula, the site is on a projecting spit of land on Hampton Roads, looking out to the Bay and across the Roads to the Norfolk area. In the beginning days, the Mother Country was on unfriendly relations with Spain, its New World rival, and later with the French and the Dutch, and the purpose of the fort was to repel enemy warships before invading troops could make a landing. In the logic of traditional warfare, the enemy was to be repelled at the border.

Seven guns were mounted at the fort, served by fifty men, who also acted as garrison troops against Indian attacks. Because Jamestown and Williamsburg were the capitals of the Colony (and Jamestown, of course, the first settlement), history has somewhat neglected the fine plantations and thriving community that flourished in the early days at the lower end of the Peninsula, where Hampton grew into one of the most charming small cities in the East

In the 150 years after Fort Algernourne's construction, the garrison continued in various stages of neglect, and at the time of the Revolution the fort served no purpose against the British. Recognizing the important of the site, the Americans planned a more formidable and elaborate fort to guard the entrance into the tidewater areas of the state that was then one of the most powerful in the newly formed union. With a praiseworthy dismissal of political considerations, Secretary of

War Monroe went to the greatest war school of the day and selected Napoleon's chief engineer, Simon Bernard, to design an impregnable fort.

General Bernard began construction in 1819, and by 1823 the work was sufficiently advanced for the first garrison to move in. An early soldier there was a sergeant-major under the alias of Perry, and one of the first romantic associations of Fort Monroe was the tour of duty spent behind its ramparts by Edgar Allan Poe. From the fort, the young poet wrote some of his most piteous letters to his harsh foster-father, John Allan; twenty years later, world-famous Poe, America's first professional writer, returned to the site to read *The Raven* to an audience at the old Hygeia Hotel, a few months before his death.

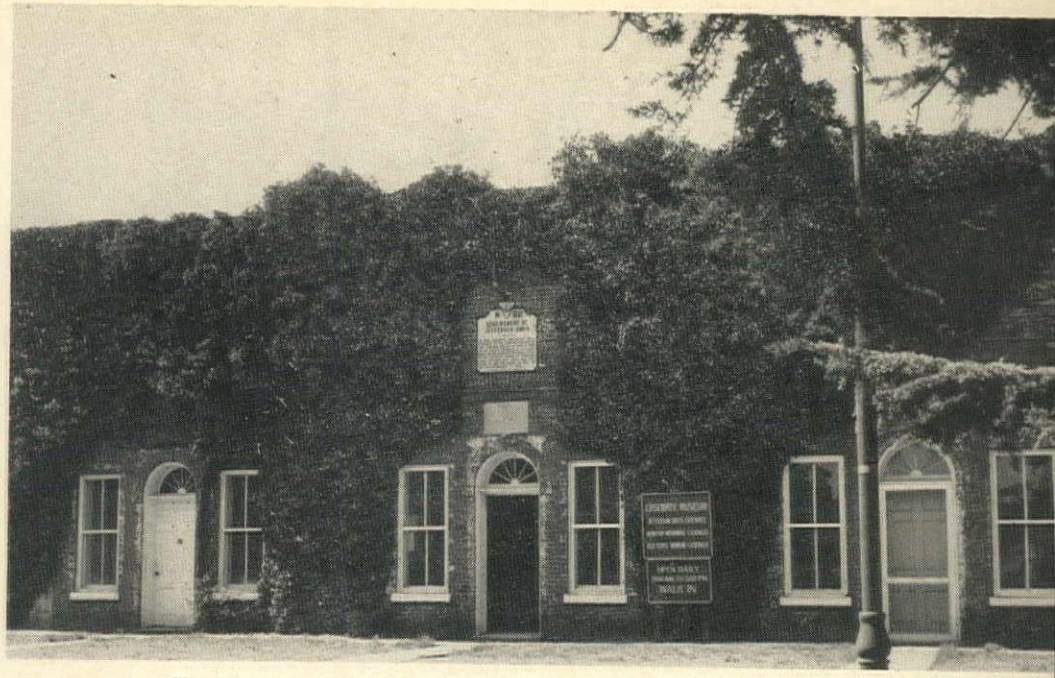
Another Virginian, Lieutenant R. E. Lee, newly out of West Point, began a tour of duty at the fort in 1831. He was married there to the great-granddaughter of Martha Washington, and their first child was born in a house still standing. The work on the fort was completed by Lee, in 1834, and this is a significant point: not one of the three fortified places which Lee worked on — Charleston, Richmond, and Fort Monroe—fell to an enemy during the Civil War. Lee's engineering knowledge of Fort Monroe made him certain that the Confederates could not take it, and the vital site remained a knife in the side of the Confederacy during the four years of the war.

Perhaps because the fort, so perfectly designed for its stage of warfare, remained in the possession of the enemy, Virginians have understandably been something less than enthusiastic about its significance during the war. As a matter of fact, perhaps because the fort was in Virginia, national historians have made relatively little of its dramatic role.

The only truly important installation retained by the Union forces in Confederate territory, Fort Monroe not only deprived Virginia of a protection for its inland waterways but served as the base for a number of crucial amphibious operations. Because the Confederates did not control Fort Monroe, they could not hold the lower Peninsula nor Norfolk and its important area. Because the Federals held Fort Monroe, they controlled the James and the York Rivers, and from the base were launched the successful operations against Port Royal, S. C., and Roanoke Island, N. C., that provided the needed naval bases to make the Union blockade a reality.

From the Chamberlin Hotel today, you can look down on the (re-built) wharf where McClellan landed his 100,000 plus men in the beginning of the only imaginative plan ever designed for the capture of Richmond. As a forerunner of the experimental work the army is doing today at the fort, when McClellan was there the first tri-service warfare (land, sea, air) in history was introduced. With the US Navy supporting McClellan's land-

(Continued on page 39)



CASEMATE MUSEUM



CHAPEL OF THE CENTURION

PARKS

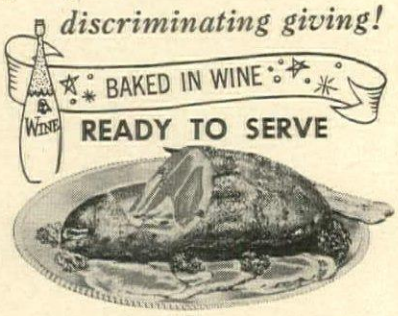
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AS THE TWIG IS BENT

(FROM FEBRUARY, 1960)

WITH THE Virginia General Assembly now occupied with practical and controversial problems, Virginians might forget that 1960 constitutes 342 years of the meeting of this oldest representative law-making body in the Western Hemisphere. We are reminded of the historic tradition of the General Assembly by a book written by Mrs. Nora Miller Turman, recently published by Garrett and Massie of Richmond.

Mrs. Turman, a high school librarian in Accomack, has published many articles relating to early Virginia history, and this narrative is centered around George Yeardley, an early Governor of the Virginia Colony.

Romantic tales about the "Cavaliers" and Pocahontas in Virginia's beginnings have often obscured the part played in the colonization by resourceful and fairly hard-bitten men of enterprise. During the rule of the London Company particularly, the fate of Virginia's existence was resolved by rather desperately unromantic characters. It can never be sufficiently stressed that settling in the early colony represented more of a hazard, say, than pioneering across the western plains two centuries later. The pioneers left from established frontier posts to pass through Indian country. The nearest settlement to the Virginia "pioneers" was London, and they settled on the fringe of an unexplored continent populated by Indians. Since any wealth to be gained in this new land would be acquired by extremely hard work, and the surviving of indescribable hardships, naturally few persons who were well established at home undertook the adventure in the early days.

Most of those of established background who came were interested in colonization, and many of these were subscribers to the London Company. However, their interest did not necessarily fit this small proportion of the settlers for the hardships of a new frontier. Very likely the starving colony would have collapsed and been abandoned except for the professional soldiers who acted as administrators Gates, Dale and Yeardley were the highly able men who managed the colony with practical, businesslike methods. In those days a young man who wished to be a carcer soldier was apprenticed in the army for seven years, and then received his commission. George Yeardley was commissioned in 1608 at the age of 21. Coming early to Virginia, he rose in authority as second in command to Sir Thomas Dale, and

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was only 31 years old when he became acting Governor in 1618.

It was during his office that the first representative law-making body met on this continent on a very hot July 30th in 1619.

Though many efforts have been made to use this first Assembly as an indication of the democratic spirit in the Virginia Colony, this is really stretching the facts to fit a later-day concept. The representative body of the House of Burgesses was actually granted the colonists by liberal factions in the London Company, and its primary function was to act as a counterbalance to the Governor's Council. As the term "the people" is understood today, the members of the House of Burgesses were not representative of the general population. Only landowners were eligible to serve, and their service did not depend on pleasing constituents.

However, though this was limited self-government in comparison with what self-government has come to mean, it was truly the beginning of popular representation and, most significantly, developed in Virginians the habit of responsibility for their own government. It is difficult to conceive that as complex as are the problems confronting our present General Assembly, the early law makers faced incomparably more difficult problems than we have known in our time, for their problems began with the primary one of survival.

Hence, the body of laws which evolved were concerned with the fundamentals of the life of a society. In erecting this legal structure, the representatives acted with a knowledge of, and responsibility to, their specific order, as it evolved from the wilderness.

One and one-half centuries after the first meeting of the General Assembly, the representatives' understanding of their own needs and interests led them to make a redefinition of the rights of man when they felt that the Home Government in London was acting without due regard for the individual rights of this specific colony. It was not easy for Virginia to sever the timeless bonds with the Mother Country in protection of its principles of self-government, nor was it easy in the next century to sever relations with the union of states over the same principle. But the habit of preserving its own society, which began in the little church at Jamestown in 1619, was even harder to break. It is no tradition of "Cavaliers" or of highsounding generalities that has carried the founding principles across nearly three and one-half centuries until today.

With all the elegance with which some of its leaders have lived, all the charm of manner and pleasing customs, essentially the tradition has been perpetuated by gentlemen like Sir George Yeardley. During his administration, Yeardley himself lived in an imperial manner, with 3500 acres surrounding his mansion. But, doing well for himself, he brought a mixture of idealism and practicality to his dedication to the Colony. The malarial fringe of frontier along the James River was a long way from the London of Shakespeare in which he had grown up, and only a deep identification with the Colony could have compensated him for what many of his contemporaries regarded as an exile.

1619 was a turning point in many ways for the precarious little settlement. Many of those turns, including the House of Burgesses, led to the Virginia which we know today. It is well to remember, in our present complications, that it did not grow as if by magic. It came, as all growth must, by making fewer errors than right turns in times of decision ◄

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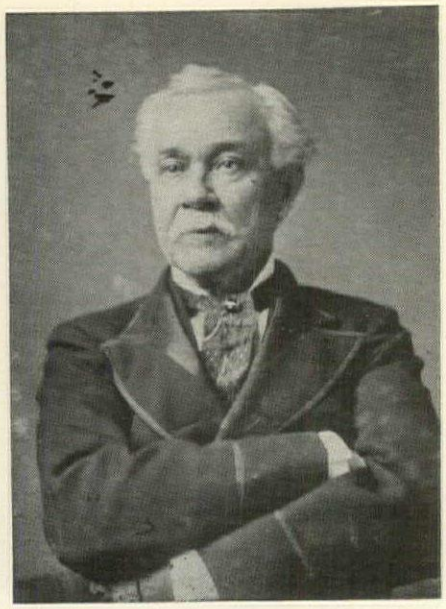
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Once in a Lifetime

(From August, 1962)



General Joseph R. Anderson

(From the Cook Collection, Valentine Museum)

As the days of the past June approached the 26th, my friend and I began to wonder what we could do to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Seven Days Battle Around Richmond. This was the first time Lee led an army in combat, and it was the first battle in which the Confederate forces introduced strategy in their defense. This battle was far more than an historic event to my friend and me. The Seven Days was a field we had studied for many years and on which we had taken countless trips.

In doing research, the way would be lonely without friends, and I have been fortunate in my companions. Mr. McDonald Wellford has pursued the avocation of battlefield study as a scholar. As the research is for me also an avocation, the field was for us a center of interest where we went on Sundays, holidays, and for which Mr. Wellford has prepared a fine collection of maps, So a commemoration was a very personal thing with us.

As the date approached, we grew burdened with the solemnity of the knowledge that this observation was a thing we could do only this once in our life, and that no one now living on earth could ever do this thing again. The action began at around three in the afternoon, and the Confederates became fully committed at five o'clock. At this time General Lee crossed from an observation post on the south side of the Chickahominy and reached Mechanicsville. My friend and I decided that was the time to go. The simplest observation would be to follow the course of A. P. Hill's troops into the action and end our trip where the battle ended, in the terrible slaughter that came at dusk along Beaver Dam Creek.

June 26 came on Tuesday and the weather favored our two-man observation by nearly duplicating the 26th in 1862. On the Thursday in 1862 it had been showery for several days before, and the clear day of the 26th was hot and humid. This year the showers continued during the day and, when the skies cleared in the late afternoon, it was hot and humid.

Summer is not the time when we usually go on the fields, and it is a poor time to work battlefields. The foliage and underbrush restrict the range of vision and it is not possible to get a view of the terrain. Also, the brush holds the menaces of ticks, chiggers and moccasins, and in the denseness the woods are oppressively hot. We figured the woods could be no hotter than the anachronistic automobile which took us to the field, and we were sufficiently familiar with the ground not to require an extended view.

After a pause for map reading, we proceeded across the Meadow Bridges and onto the series of roads that jogged at angles, north, southeast, northeast, and back southeast into the road to Mechanicsville. It was in that area, where we turned out of an elbow in the road, that Hill's lead brigade—Virginians commanded by Charlie Field—came under heavy concentric artillery fire. The volunteer troops had not been in battle before, and we talked of those men, and talked of all the new houses that made a suburban community of the fields over which the Virginians had marched. Then we lamented the passing of the grounds as they had been, and observed that had we not worked the fields in other days we could not have known the terrain as the soldiers knew it.

We passed through the town of Mechanicsville, where the highways converged at gas stations and eating places, and then we halted again. We needed a long look at the maps, not for orientation, but to recapture the image of the country when Mechanicsville was a village drowsing at the crossroads. We were also early for the movement of the attack along the road to Beaver Dam Creek, which was delivered between six and seven. So we drove along the highway, what had been called Old Church Road, to look at the locations where Hill's other brigades extended the advance, while waiting for the long overdue arrival of Stonewall Jackson.

Where the narrowing stream now crosses under a bridge barely distinguishable from the highway, we located the crossing of Hill's left brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Joseph R. Anderson. Anderson was a West Pointer who, leaving the army to enter industry, had first become the manager and then the owner of Tredegar Iron Works. Anderson would soon be transferred back to the converted war plant, where he carried on something of a one-man battle against U. S. industry. On that long ago June 26, General Anderson got one brigade across the creek, where the men huddled in a thicket, waiting to establish contact with a Jackson who was never coming.

By the time we left the scene of Anderson's engagement, the intruding present had been expunged from our minds, and our imaginations had completed the projection into another time. When we returned to Mechanicsville and into the winding road on the line of the assault, no effort was required to look through the houses as though they were not

there. (Unless this triumph of the inner eye over optical impressions can be made, parts of most battlefields are no more than real estate developments.)

On the road over which we moved slowly—ignoring the impatient blasts made by all-too-modern motorists—the brigades of Dorsey Pender and Roswell Ripley had advanced at the same hour 100 years before. Pender's North Carolinians belonged in A. P. Hill's Division; Ripley's Brigade, of North Carolina and Georgia Regiments, was the first unit which D. H. Hill had gotten over the Chickahominy from the south bank. Everything was in confusion. President Davis and his entourage formed a group outside the village, near that of Lee and his staff, and both Lee and Davis urged D. H. Hill to send in Ripley on A. P. Hill's right.

The Federal position occupied a ridge on the eastern side of the steep-banked Beaver Dam Creek. Where the road from Mechanicsville turned to cross the creek, the Federal position was protected by the wide millpond of Ellerson's Mill. In front of the millpond and on both sides, entangled brush impeded the progress of attacking troops. On the opposite hillside, the Federal infantry was formed in tiers, with guns on the crest. Pender had attacked this position earlier and his inexperienced troops recoiled. It was General Lee's hope that Ripley, extending Pender's right, could turn the Federal flank by moving close to the Chickahominy, where the Federal's hill sloped away toward the river.

Ripley seemed either not to understand the assignment (everybody was giving him orders) or to suffer a constriction of his faculties at the commitment to combat. A West Pointer with Mexican War experience, Ripley had married into a South Carolina family and had for some years been engaged in business in Charleston. Duing the first year of the war, his activities had been in organization of state troops and he had come with his untried brigade to Richmond less than one month before. Ripley was an assertive, contumacious man, openly disapproving of all superiors, and quite suddenly he was to lead regiments in a crucial action across an open field.

Ripley was brave enough. Most all of them knew how to die. Leading effectively was something else. His troops, in relatively new uniforms, formed in regular lines as in a picture-book charge, their red flags, innocent of battle names, hanging limply in the still heat near the end of day. The two regiments who were supposed to make the turning movement, the 44th Georgia and the 1st North Carolina, marched straight ahead for perhaps half-a-mile. Under the spray of lead from the batteries across Beaver Dam Creek, the still-faced men would not come under infantry fire until their lines passed over the cultivated fields of the Catlin farm.

Where the troops reached the plateau of this farm, my friend and I turned off the road and onto the private drive of the present owner, Mr. J. W. Carter. Once the traffic was left behind, no effort of the imagination was required as we moved across the same fields, looking at the same grove of trees shadowing the same house that stood at the same hour when Ripley's doomed men marched toward the slope leading down to the creek. At the house, we exchanged courtesies with Mr. Carter, a gentleman in his seventies who has lived at the old Catlin place for the past 56 years. He explained what changes had been made on the house and explained that, as far as he knew, the ground between the house and the river was unchanged since the evening when Ripley's troops crossed.

We followed a lane between cultivated fields until we reached a heavily foliaged light woods, about one-half mile from the road. There we abandoned the car and approached the underbrush of vines and creepers growing nearly a foot above the ground. Parting the vividly green vines that draped the trees, we peered down a slope to the sluggish river. This was the slope by which Ripley might have reached the flank at the end of the Federal hill, but if any of his men followed this course they were not in force.

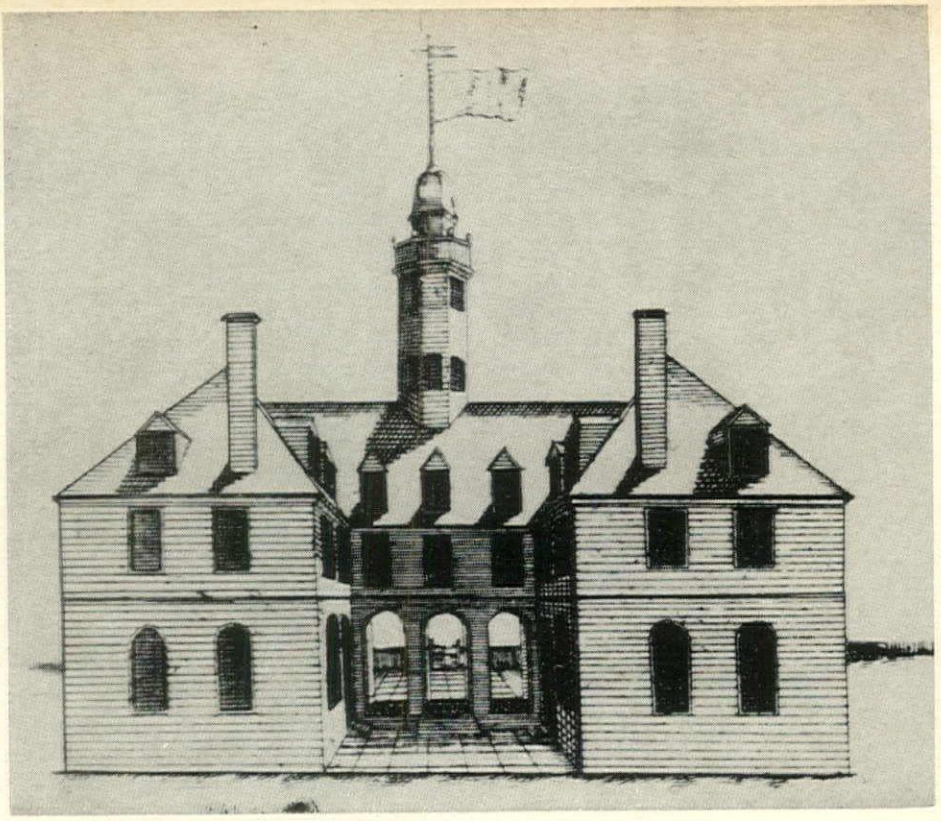
We withdrew from the entangled woods, bringing out three later discovered ticks but encountered no moccasins. My friend wore heavy shoes coming above his ankle and he was nervous for me, wearing only open sandals. We then turned alongside the wooded slope paralleling the river and crossed the edge of the field where peas were growing toward the fateful incline down which Pender and Ripley led their men to the death-trap at the creek bottom.

It was then seven-thirty, about the hour when Ripley's battle-innocent troops rushed with their high screams down the hill to the matted brush at the bottom. Nobody kept his eye on a watch during the action. The men remembered the sun was setting and that was around seven-thirty. On reaching the pit at the bottom of the hill, Ripley recognized the hopelessness of his Napoleonic heroics and the men sought such shelter as they could find. It was more dangerous to go back than to stay where they were. Near the creek bank the troops were out of artillery range.

As dusk was settling, one of D. H. Hill's batteries unlimbered on the plateau behind them, and the fire of the four guns distracted the enemy enough so that, as night fell, the men could crawl out, bringing their wounded. Silently we walked back through the falling light to where the automobile presented the only object that did not belong on the field of a century before. The cool of the evening came on, and partridges fluttered by.

Mr. Wellford had, at some considerable effort, discovered two old-fashioned tin-cups of the sort that served the Confederates as an all-purpose utensil. These were filled from a thermos with a liquid for which the poor, underfed soldiers had constantly pined—coffee "from Java," as they said. In the stillness of the evening, we drank to the men who had died on that field that the Confederacy might live. If it lived only four years as a nation, it has lived at least one century in the hearts of men, and become an imperishable legend of courage and devotion to all mankind.

A bob-white calling was the only sound on the field of the tumult and the dying which we commemorated. As we turned to leave the quiet fields, we were somewhat awed by the realization that in all the world we were the only people who had or ever could observe the one hundredth anniversary of the opening battle of the great campaign that, lifting the siege of Richmond, brought Lee into his fame. The sensation would be difficult to communicate, but the mood was not broken by a return to the city, its night streets lit by neon, and it is not likely ever to be forgotten. For any kind of anniversay of an historic hour, an equivalent of this pilgrimage by two friends can be heartily recommended. Where our parents' generations needed fireworks for celebrations in the quiet tenor of their days, silence now provides the moving change. ▲



VIRGINIA'S FIRST CAPITOL BUILDING

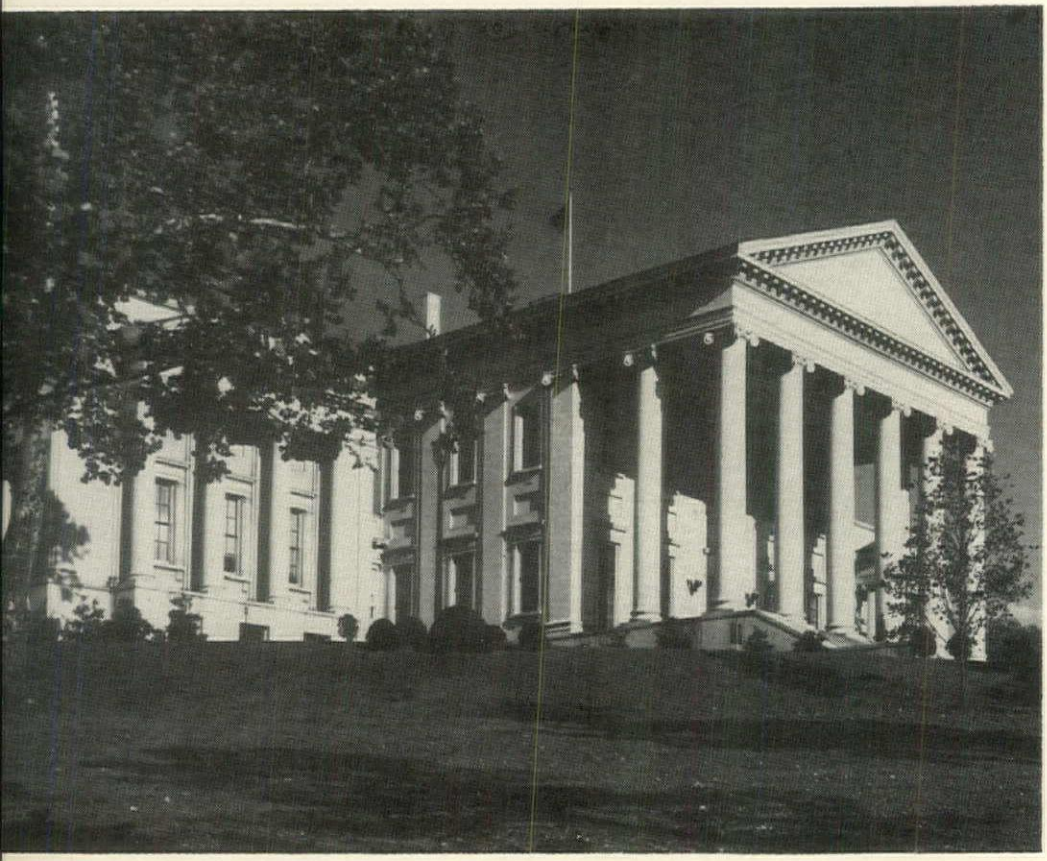
What Is An Image?

(FROM JULY, 1962)

THE OVERWORKED WORD, "image," has become something of a cliché as advertisers loosely applied it to every conceivable product and the United States grew concerned about its impression on the rest of the world. Yet, if the word can be viewed free of the recent connotations, "image" is particularly applicable to the evocations brought to mind by Virginia.

Because of its age, past glories and historic associations, the state to most non-Virginians suggests the beginnings of America, the sites of other times and the birthplaces of famous individuals. To those uninterested in such matters, unless they possess a knowledge of the present Virginia, the "image" evoked would be of an anachronistic region, muted and mouldy, where nothing lively ever happened.

Unfortunately for this "image," many transients in the state—on business or as tourists, or merely passing through—find in the amusement areas some justification of the impression of a museum whose doors are closed at five o'clock. Unless alcohol is served by the drink, no community can offer any form of night life, or any substitute for cocktail lounges or plush dinner-spots where music is played and couples may "dine and dance." A recent visitor to Richmond resurrected the old joke: "Have you ever been in Richmond?" "Yes, but it was closed." Though natives grow accustomed or resigned to these vacuums in the state's social life, the fact must be faced that these local customs form elements in the "image" of the state that could make it appear something of a relic rather than an enchanting spot in modern America.



The effect of this aspect of the Virginia "image" is probably not greatly significant, and there is no way it could be measured except by questionnaires to tourists. Far more significant is the "image" held in some segments of the state's backwardness, especially in the areas where economic opportunities, education and politics overlap to form a fundamental structure. The detractors of Virginia on those counts are, either willfully or in ignorance, living

in the past where they accuse Virginians of dwelling.

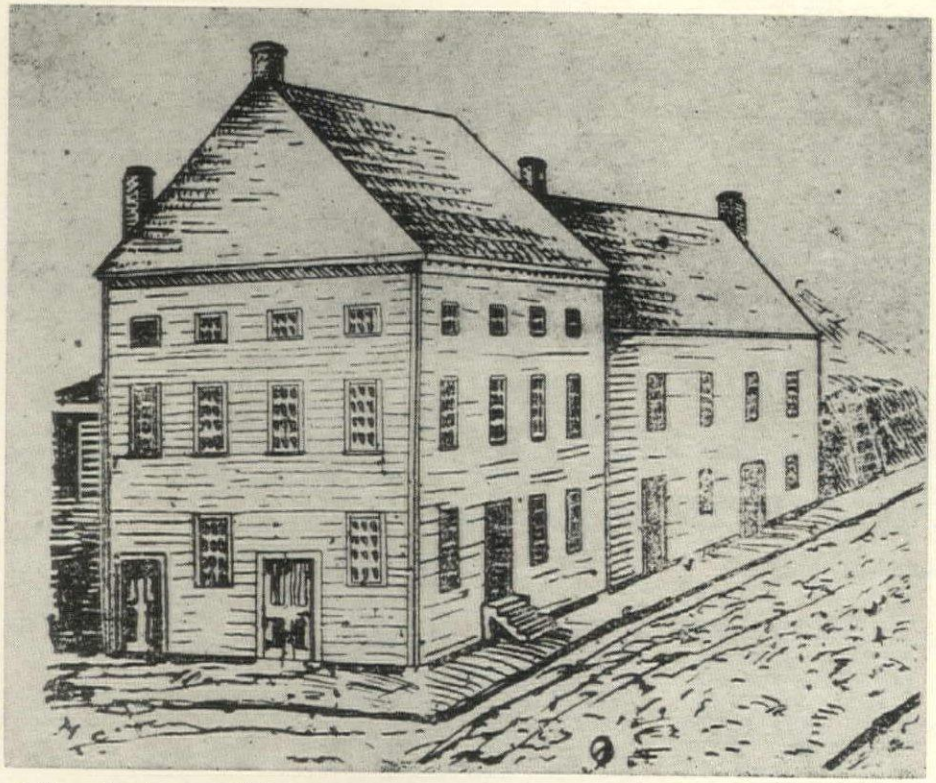
Because of external factors, mostly the result of the Civil War and Reconstruction, Virginia and other Southern states did suffer a grievous lag behind other regions well into the twentieth century. Though Virginia's deficiencies were not caused either by the slothfulness or the stupidity of its people, it was true that Virginians tended "to look back to glory" and in some segments the ancestor-worship could well cause a visitor to wonder if he were in ancient China or contemporary America. It was also true that the slow tenor of the ways seemed out-of-key with the times, and a lack of dynamism in intellectual areas for a fact caused many native sons to follow scholarly or artistic pursuits elsewhere and offered little inducement for bringing in fresh minds. It is finally true that a certain complacence developed about all this that could support the impression of a people contentedly drowsing in the setting sun of a dying age.



This painting, by Howard Pyle shows the second capitol, where gathered council, court and burgesses. The present reconstructed building was erected after plans for the first building.

But a change in this Virginia has been occurring for the past 40 years, imperceptibly most of the time, and very evident in the past decade. Though statistics in themselves are not necessarily an accurate measure, as our most advanced progressives constantly employ statistical criteria, almost any index one would wish to use would show Virginia to have been a rapidly growing state in the past three decades.

In the 1960 census, Virginia's growth in population in the preceding ten years had, at 19.5%, been higher than that of any state south of Maryland and east of the Mississippi, except the special case of Florida. Nor was this comparison limited to the South. Its rate of growth was higher than that of New York, Pennsylvania, most New England states and many midwestern states. This is by no means a matter of birth rates. It indicates the cessation of migration from the state and the influx of new residents. Proof of these trends is that the median age for Virginians is 27.1 years as compared with 29.5 in the nation, and Virginia is higher than the national average in the age groups from 20 to 34.



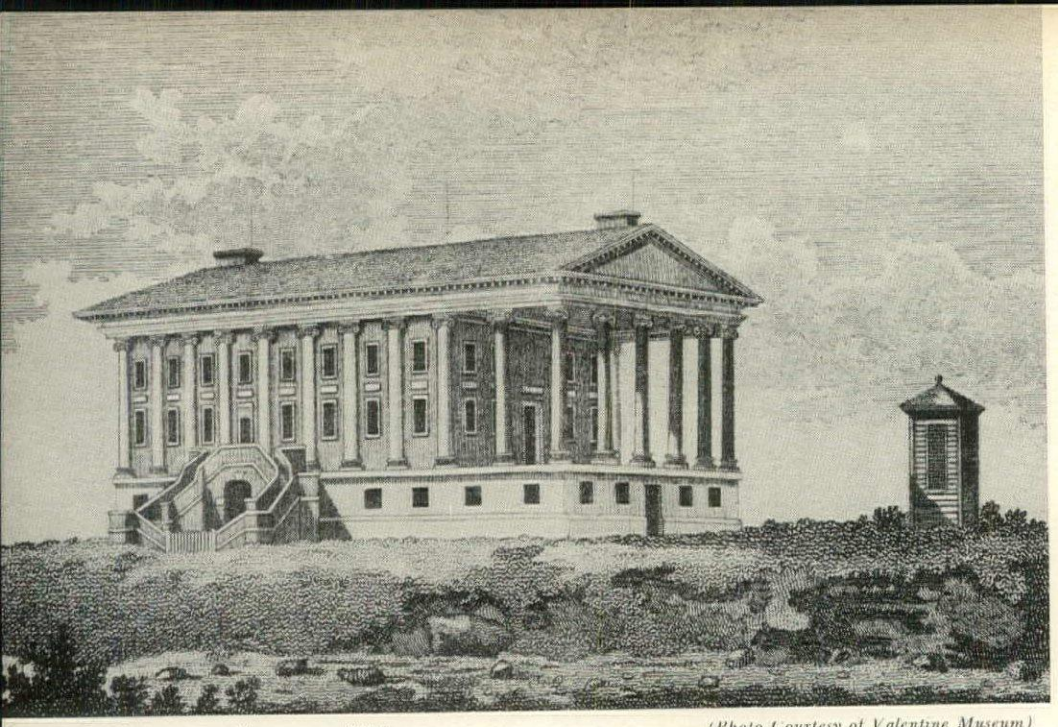
This modest frame building, a store and warehouse, served as the first, temporary capitol in Richmond.

It is no accident that these tables are accompanied by a growth in manufacturing employment that doubled the national average in the 1950 decade and seems rising at an even higher rate currently. Nor is it an accident that the growth in Virginia's manufacturing was accompanied by the demonstrable success of its Right-To-Work Laws, with the prohibition of violence and intimidation. For the five year period, 1956-1960 inclusive, in Virginia man days lost as a percentage of all man days worked was, at .06, less than one-fifth the national average.

This enters the area of the state government in its relation to industry. The most strident accusations of the backwardness of our government have come from liberal fanatics who resent any governing body that remains impervious to the "progress" they insist upon inflicting on the nation. Our representatives have been motivated by the convictions that they are in a better position to know what is good for Virginia, and they have reflected the preference of the majority that the state must act according to its traditional character and not according to passing fashions.

In so doing across the past century, Virginians have exposed themselves to many jeers, and even today—or especially today—the absence of a strong

(Please turn the page)



VIRGINIA'S CAPITOL—1802 *(Photo Courtesy of Valentine Museum)*

liberal taint is displeasing to many. But the Virginia government was in operation a long time before the past century, and Virginians do not always look backwards in nostalgia or ancestor worship. Having evolved out of, and not broken off from, its past, Virginia takes pride in the spirit of the past which it has thus far been able to perpetuate in a changing world.

Without question, until recently too many old habits and details were included in the preservation of the spirit of the heritage. It was the price paid to sustain the Virginia character, which now has assumed a standing as a sound, vigorous conservative character within a frightened nation with a divided personality. This character would today present the true "image" of Virginia, and it was sustained because the state government has historically held the "image" of what Virginia was and should be. ▲

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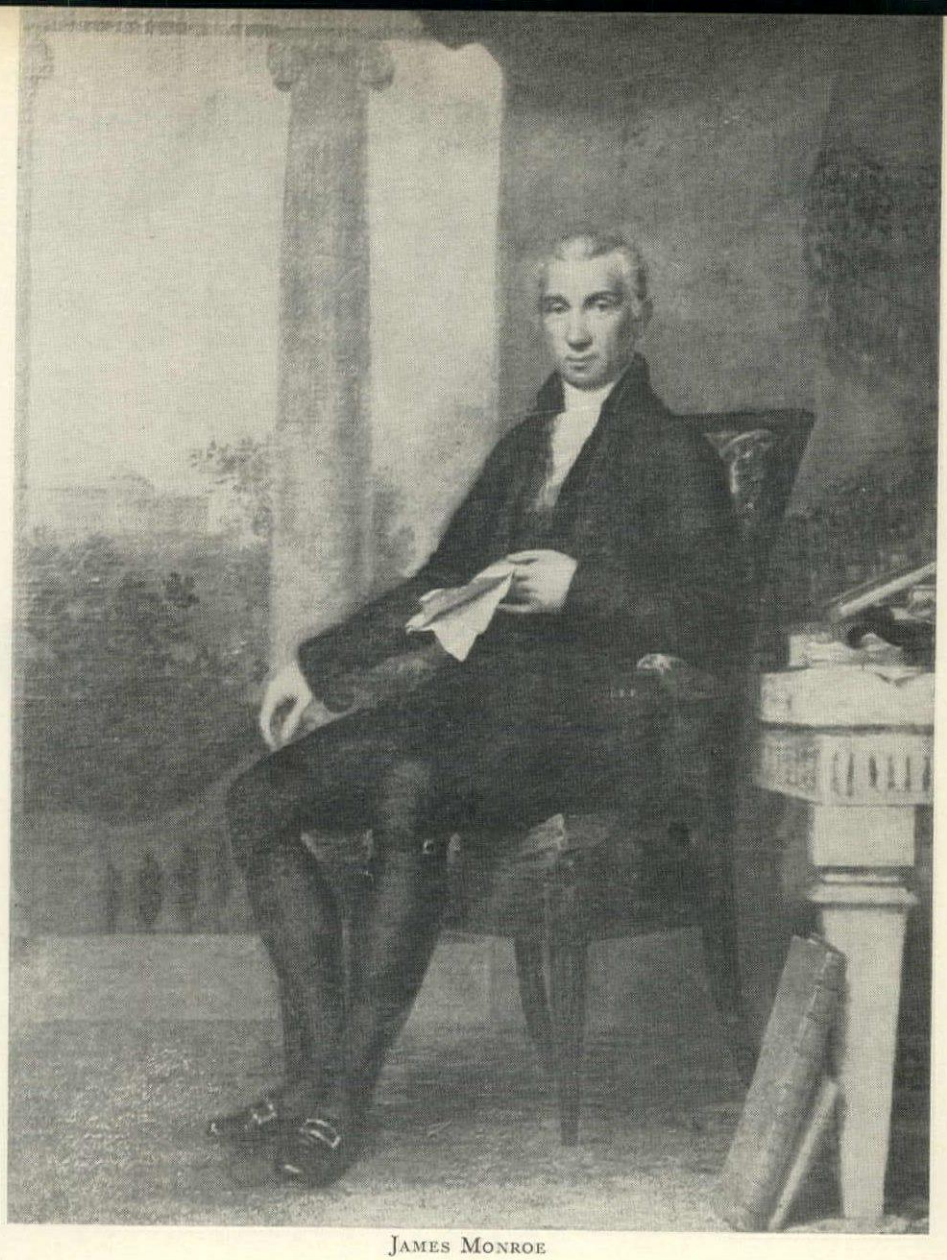
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Know Your Virginians in the Nation's History

James Monroe

PART I
(FROM MARCH, 1958)



JAMES MONROE

THE NATION IS HONORING the two hundredth anniversary of Monroe's birth this year with the issuance of a three-cent stamp, and for a century-and-a-half world politics in relation to the Western Hemisphere have been determined by the doctrine bearing his name. Yet, curiously little is known about the former Virginia governor who became the country's fifth president, and that little is distorted by those generalities which label aspects of history for convenient pigeon-holing.

A "plain man," he was called in a neat epitome of his background, and "dull" summarized the personality of this last leader of the Virginia Dynasty. Yet, how plain and dull could a young man have been who at the age of nineteen was commissioned major and appointed aide-de-camp on the staff of Brigadier-General Lord Stirling—who at the age of twenty was personally recommended by George Washington, at the age of twenty-one was selected by Thomas Jefferson as his protege and military aide when Jefferson was governor? Repeatedly selected to represent the young nation in Europe, he was a vital influence in arranging the Louisiana Purchase, and certainly the delicate maneuvering required by such assignments would not be entrusted to a statesman characterized by either plainness or dullness. Then why is James Monroe categorized with these labels and barely outside the pigeonhole reserved for those faceless marchers in the presidential parade such as Millard Fillmore and Chester Arthur?

A guess is that the strong Virginian suffered bad historical timing. In the perspective of history he, like the second Adams, came along in the wake of Jefferson's muchly publicized liberal movement and before the equally publicized Democratic movement in which Andrew Jackson introduced the rule of the mob. The next jump is to the often praised humanity of Lincoln, with *his* inaccurate label of The Great Emancipator. Thus we have a row of pinnacles that run . . . Washington, Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln . . . and the presidents falling between are lucky if their names are spelled right.

The reputation of Jackson's successor, Martin van Buren, was wrecked in his own day by a label. The Western mobs chased him out of Washington by calling him an "elegant dandy," too exquisite for lovers of the true democracy, when the hard-working and skillful politician had begun life above his father's saloon in New York State and risen with the support of the Number One Democrat himself, "Old Hickory" Jackson. James Polk's achievements during the Mexican War period were dismissed in history when the label of mediocrity," applied by political enemies, stuck despite all evidence to the contrary.

But neither van Buren nor Polk, one-termers, made contributions comparable to Monroe's, and no president spanned in the actions of his own life history such momentous changes in the nation's history. In the nearly half-century from his 18th to 66th year, Monroe *acted* in all the events whereby 13 British colonies on the fringe of an unexplored continent—which was divided between three British nations—changed into a new world power that could warn the old world powers (Monroe Doctrine) to keep out of the continent. It is inconceivable that a dull man could have been selected by fate and his fellows for leadership *at every stage of his life,* beginning when, as an 18-year-old student at William and Mary, he was appointed lieutenant in a company of the Continental line — and, hence, became the only president of

(Please turn the page)

the U. S. who served as a line-officer in the Revolution.

Yet, even in the accomplishments of his career, there was one element that, in a curious way, further explains the labels hung on Monroe. When he was president, peace came to the bitter factions that had struggled for power in the new nation and his administration was called "the era of good feeling." But Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln each promoted a partisan faction, to which each contributed some very powerful propaganda. The result was that their political descendants have kept alive the legend of those men for purposes of advancing their own causes, and phrases of those partisan leaders have been removed from context to be passed from generation to generation like the wisdom of the ages.

Probably no line in history has been so misquoted and misused as Jefferson's catch-phrase about all men being created equal; no American ever believed less in the equality of individuals than Jefferson, and the harm that has resulted from distortions of this line is incalculable and endless. Andrew Jackson's bully-boy methods of resolving the differences between the sections removed the South's legitimate grievances from the realm of principle and set the pattern of meeting sectional protest with force. His heroics sound stirring in the telling, but from him derived the ultimate resolution by force of arms when democratic processes failed. Lincoln contradicted himself constantly to suit the occasion, but partisan words of his, spoken in expediency, have been applied to the confusion of American problems for one hundred years.

While the facts about these men are glossed over, their myths go marching on, and as individuals these "champions" of partisan factions possessed that element of personal color that lends itself to legend. The many-sided Jefferson had his inventions; earthy Lincoln had his folksy anecdotes and aggressive Jackson his violent episodes. In comparison with these "characters," Monroe would not be a colorful personality. But not to be ranked among the characters, around whom legends have been spun, surely need not imply that Monroe (or any one else) would be the *opposite* of colorful. In comparison with these characters, George Washington also was not a colorful man, nor were many of the leaders whose considerable contributions did not happen to serve the purpose of partisan factions.

There was, however, an adjective applied to James Monroe when he was quite young that carries a connotation that could make him appear, what might be called at best, unexciting. That was "sensible." Both Washington and Alexander Hamilton, in recommending the ambitious twenty-year-old Revolutionary major as "brave and active," specifically called attention to him as a "sensible" man. This word does not come across to us as the high compliment it was in the 18th Century.

That was the Age of Reason, when men suspected the romantic and sentimental, the quixotic, and the turn of mind most admired was clear-thinking realism. In its practical application in a revolutionary movement, a cold-headed leader such as Washington needed most of all men of good sense—men whose minds were unclouded by impractical theories, unswayed by passing winds of doctrine, untroubled by personal compulsions, and most of all, unfrightened by making decisions. A man of good sense had courage with discretion, initiative with sound judgment. He could be trusted with an important assignment in the assurance that his intelligence would be applied with self-confident energy, and nothing would divert him from the main objective. A man of good sense had the qualities that would be sought today in a top executive, in business or industry or (hopefully) in government.

(Continued on page 45)

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(Continued from page 7)

indeed, the trauma—of the total effects of the war quickened the awareness and sharpened the definition of a past uniquely ours. Belonging only to us, this past was warp and woof, blood and bone, of our identity in the larger world in which we occupied our geographic location. As the geographic location was configurated with landmarks of the life that had gone before, our physical place on earth reflected back our emotions deriving from earlier experiences associated particularly and only with this place. It was, what would be currently called, a "circular" sort of experience. We belonged of this particular land and this particular land was a part of our consciousness, so that the consciousness was composed of a *sense* of experience which we as individuals had not actually lived.

In my generation, and in those of the older generations now gone, the validity of the total experience was taken for granted. Never discussing the phenomenon, we casually exchanged references in which the past was not differentiated from the present. This would, I imagine, constitute what is meant by a *"living* heritage." The past of our people lived in us as the memories of our dead kinspeople lived in us. The Confederate aspect of the living heritage was that, by its immediacy in the minds of our parents and grandparents, of countless neighbors and older kinspeople, it served as a bridge to the time it evoked and to the total past distilled in that time.

As a child, I don't ever remember studying the Civil War. I really knew nothing about the war as it is studied. But I remember at kindergarten in a school (which had served as a Confederate hospital) cutting out paper silver stars to be glued on the red cross of a Confederate battleflag. I didn't know what the Confederacy was either, but I did know it was *"us."*

I remember going to a school children's Saturday matinée at the old Academy to see *The Birth of a Nation.* The downstairs of the theater was occupied by Confederate veterans from the Old Soldiers' Home and, when the band played *Dixie* during a battle-scene, they threw their hats into the air and shook the house with a Rebel Yell. From that moment on, the Confederacy was a living experience to me.

Study of the war began much later when, as an adult, I was living in New York City during the Depression, and my thoughts turned back in nostalgia to my own people in that other, more heroic, epoch. However, the studies only authenticated the sense of personal experience. As mentioned earlier, this was—even in the '30's and later—a generally shared experience, and until very recently it somehow never occurred to me that this sense of the past *experienced* had ceased to be.

Then, last year, when I published a book on General Lee, a Georgian (or ex-Georgian) reviewed it for the Chicago *Tribune,* and wrote that I would not be the last historian of the Confederacy but I would be "the last Confederate historian." As I pay little attention to reviews, and rarely finish reading most of them, I passed over this line as no more than a spiteful sideswipe. (I regarded it as "spiteful" because I had once done this man a favor.)

Later I returned to it more seriously after an ex-Mississippian, reviewing the book in the New York *Times,* actually attacked my Confederate attitude and stated categorically that I had written without knowledge of contemporary evaluations. This ex-Mississippian is one of the neo-renegades who, in embracing the

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(From preceding page)

Liberal Literary Establishment, has to push harder than a Northerner to prove he is free of any taint of sympathy for the traditional South. I was by no means without knowledge of the current evaluations, which are gradually transforming the Reconstruction period into a "golden age" of humanitarianism; I had deliberately risked (with some trepidation from the publisher, which proved to be well-founded) the ire of the Establishment by writing from the viewpoint of the *experience*—as it happened to Virginians who survived it—rather than from re-evaluations based on statistics and current attitudes.

When I perceived the assurance which the renegade Mississippian felt in denying the validity of the Confederate experience, I then realized that the ex-Georgian (whether or not in spite) had stated a truth in calling me "the last Confederate historian"—in the meaning of the last to write out of the memory of hearing veterans give a Rebel Yell to *Dixie,* the last to whom soldiers were grandfathers and great-uncles who transmitted their era in casual conversation, the last to whom the Confederate era felt as if it were a personal memory.

Somewhat shaken by this, I soon discovered that my children —growing up in a home in which work in the Civil War constituted their father's productions—most definitely do not feel the Confederate time as an experience. Although my oldest daughter had been in school several years before she learned from teachers, at about the age of eight, that Virginia was in the United States and that *Dixie* was not the anthem of her "country," it was not the same as hearing older people talk in the home of an experience as if it had happened the day before. Now, at the age of fifteen,

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she is struggling unhappily with studies in World War I and it is only factual history to her, the details of which will be forgotten along with the details of the Punic Wars and the Balkan Wars. She has no sense of sharing memories, no feeling of an "us," about these events closer to her in chronological time than the Civil War was to me.

Then, very recently, I was riding back from a day in Williamsburg with a 28-year-old professor, a former student of mine and a devoutly traditional Virginian. Nearing Seven Pines, he turned off the old Williamsburg Road (as we used to call it) to a new backway which turned out to be Laburnum Avenue. Living in the past as much as I do, I was not aware of the existence of this new road, and I could not figure out our location in relation to the Chickahominy. As we passed one section after another of brand new buildings, I began to grow disturbed at my own disorientation on a terrain once so familiar, and sought desperately for some reassuring landmark. Finally we approached Mechanicsville Turnpike and I sighed with relief.

"Now you know where you are," he said.

"That's where A. P. Hill's troops moved out from on the night before the Seven Days."

"I ought to study more on the war," he said.

"Study? I was *seeing* them!"

"You know, you do look as though you'd been seeing ghosts."

"Not ghosts. They're more real to me than all the buildings we just passed."

We both realized that this was literally true, and then we began to talk about the break in the continuity of the Confederate *experience*. During our talk, it became borne upon me, very solemnly, that the break in the continuity had been inevitable with the passing of the older generations and with the physical changes in the Virginia environment to which the younger generations have been exposed.

The suburban sprawl of growing cities has obliterated the countryside that, in my childhood, seemed so unchanging from the past; and modern highways (viable proof of our progress in the mainstream) no longer suggest travelways reaching back across time. Around the turn beyond our visions, the imagination has abandoned the play of Colonial carriages in exchange for apprehension over some idiot's having lost control of a lethal machine.

This is in no way a lament for the horse and buggy days, for personally I have long enjoyed the comforts and pleasures of modern urban life and am a creature of the sidewalks of great cities. It is merely an acceptance of the effect of physical change on the visual element of experiencing an immediacy with the past. And the loss of the visual element is only an illustration of the breaks with the immediacy made inevitable by the mutations inherent in the passage of time.

Of course, this should in no way suggest the lack of individuals in the younger generations who have a deep response to Virginia's past and an active interest in it. There are also ever growing numbers of newcomers whose respect for and interest in the state's past surpasses that of many native-born. Then, among the young generations there are those historically minded individuals, who feel a personal pull to other times, though these must be regarded as exceptions. As a whole people, a sub-nation, Virginians can no longer be said to be characterized by the *presence* of the past in their consciousness.

Their awareness of having a proud history, along with a pride in this heritage, causes Virginians to be accused of "living in the

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(From preceding page)

past." This is both glib and false. Though the state is characterized by a fundamental conservatism, its type of conservatism is not limited to Virginians nor, curiously enough, is it a characteristic of the proudest epochs in Virginia's past. Its people have some distinctive characteristics, such as social manners, which clearly extend traditional practices into the present. In fact, in my experience no people, as a total cross-section of the population, give such a general impression of gentle courtesy as Virginians. But citizens in other regions who conduct themselves with gentle manners are not accused of *living* in the past. The gentleman with the most beautifully engaging manners I ever encountered came from Evanston, when it was a suburb of Chicago. Certain types of Mississippians also are characterized by a charming gentleness of manner, but Mississippi did not emerge from the frontier until the 1840's, when Virginia's days of glory were already fading.

Despite, then, Virginians' pride in their heritage, their conservatism, their manners extending from a gentler age, the majority of Virginians actually *live* very much in the present in the sense that they do not *experience* the past in their daily lives as did those generations now gone or going. There is, needless to say, no reason why they should, even if it were possible to sustain a consciousness partly formed of regional memories when all our energies are placed under the stress required to adapt to changes that would have been inconceivable ten years ago. But, in this roundabout fashion, I am explaining that these articles were written before the impact of the epochal changes in the Western World and in America, combined with the effects of time's passage in Virginia, broke the current that had brought the past *alive* into the contemporary experience.

It might be more accurate to say that these articles were written before I became aware that the past, summarized as "The Confederate Experience," no longer *lived* as was previously general in the minds of the people as a whole. I was slow in this awareness because, having been drawn to the past in nostalgia, I spent the greater portion of my waking hours (and many of my sleeping hours via dreams) professionally and avocationally in other times, other places, and most of my intimates were of like cast of mind. (I have one friend considerably younger than I with whom over the years I have shared so many "reminiscences" of the distant

past that, for us, the Confederate period seems contemporary.)

What I was confronted with, in reading my articles, was a guilty realization that they had been written in a highly personal infatuation with Virginia's past. The articles revealed my own turning to other eras for nurture. As the psychologists would say it, "my need-supplies were met" by journeys amongst ages that held for me an enchanting reality. When I feel fatigued and stale, a day's trip spent at Shirley or Berkeley plantations will, by immediately transporting me across time, bring restoration. Williamsburg is, to me, one of the truly great achievements in contemporary Virginia, and to stroll along the quiet streets at dusk is to move effortlessly into the renewal of the most exciting of all journeys—a journey into another age, transcending time.

But all this, as I said, I guiltily perceived to be profoundly personal. I am certain that many others in Virginia shared to some extent this infatuation, and perhaps some still do, but to have written such "love letters" essentially told more about me, I fear, than about a Virginia as it experiences life in the third-quarter of the twentieth century.

Although I hold the deepest conviction that the Virginia *character*, as formed by and continuing from the past, will survive into the foreseeable future, it would be unrealistic not to confront the fact of the dilution that has occurred in the total Virginia pattern of life. It would be less than honest not to admit that the majority of the inhabitants of the state are today living in enforced adaptation to and/or with resigned acceptance of principles and practices that are opposed to almost everything that Virginians traditionally believed in.

While these traditional beliefs are subscribed to by many residents who came here from other states (indeed, some Northerners of national prominence have chosen to settle here because Virginia offers a climate for their convictions), it must be admitted that many other newcomers welcome and encourage those changes which are antithetical to the traditional-minded. And it must be further admitted that many native-born of the younger generation are ambivalent: they admire the *essential* Virginia character and are *flexibly* conservative, but chafe under, what they call, "an unenlightened provincialism" which they equate with lags from the past.

This attitude of the younger generation, including specifically college students, is significant. In their ambiv-

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alence, you see at once a pride in the heritage of the distant past and an impatience with aspects of the present which they attribute to old-fashioned practices and viewpoints persisting incongruously into a dynamic modernity. This attitude of Virginia's younger generation is distinctly untypical of the American younger generation in general; for the younger Virginians do respect the values *from the past* in their communities and clearly are not motivated by impulses to change everything—to break with all that has gone before. Since they like their land, and their behavior in general—for the majority—expresses the continuing Virginia character, I think their reservations about the present should be respected.

Of course, in our younger generations, Virginia has its kooks, its pretentious and its extremists at all social levels, but our most dedicated detractor would not charge this very thin strain with characterizing Virginia's young people. Excluding, then, this insignificant element, the rising generations in Virginia have demonstrated a desire to perpetuate the character which evolved out of the past along with a less defined, less articulated, desire to throw off unnecessary vestiges of a rural age which makes Virginia appear "countrified" in contrast to the states which have more comfortably adapted to the urban age. In this latter desire, I must say I think the young people are totally right.

On this point, I would like to take an affirmative attitude about the articles written about the past as an "experience." Since probably the majority of people living in Virginia today cannot share "The Confederate Experience" which bridged time, their natural tendency is to confuse disliked aspects of the present with outmoded vestiges of a past which, they feel hung on too long into the present. Actually, the vestigial practices and viewpoints which they renounce are of comparatively recent vintage. The "old-fashioned" represents mostly the formations growing out of reactions—first, to the long aftermath of the Civil War and, second, the stiffening defensiveness about the reaction-formations themselves. In Virginia's 359 years of existence (extending from about 500 years of an English feudal and post-feudal society), the total period of the reaction-formations and consequent defensiveness is no more than the span of a normal life.

The confusion comes in where the great periods of Virginia's heritage have been invoked to validate the period of trauma and dislocation. That Virginians used their heritage to authenticate their tragic passage through "a world they never made" was, at the time, an absolute necessity for the preservation of the people and their state. That the essential values emerged into the modern world represents a triumph of the character and its meaning to the people. But, as many therapies contain harmful side-effects, the continued invocation of the heritage became intertwined with the outmoded practices and viewpoints that were (and some still are) illy adapted to the present. The patient (character-values) survived but suffered some delusions about what had happened.

However, it is not necessary that these delusions continue. The true nature of the heritage can be disentangled and viewed from fresh perspective. Since the presence of the past cannot live in the mind now, as it did for those who have become themselves a part of the past, the people of today at least have the advantage of a perspective refracted by the pressing *realities* of things as they are.

Thus, while the articles were written in a romantic mood in another age of Virginia (as of the Western world), I feel today that to *understand* the heritage is actually of greater importance than when I assumed its pervasiveness. Thus, entirely divorced from nostalgia —accepting the changes of Virginia, the world, and as those changes are reflected in my own perspective—I would offer as confirmation of the Virginia character, studies in the realities of the heritage.

For some reason, the word "reality" always seemed to imply the adjective of "ugly," or, at least, "grim." No one ever seems to say, "Let us face the lovely reality." It would be realistic to say, "Let us face *all* the realities." This is the way a parent regards a child he loves. For guiding the child, the intelligently loving parent wants to know as far as possible the true *nature* of the life in his care. In that sense, I believe these articles contain elements of the realities of our heritage, although I would write them differently today. I would make different emphases.

For one thing, the current reiterations about aspects of the founding principles of Virginia are not only irrelevant in today's adaptations to changed order, but oversimplify Virginia's past to the degree of giving false impressions of attitudes in the development of the heritage.

For instance, George Washington was called "the father of his country" because it was his will and purpose that created a national government, a republic, out of a group of self-interested states. He brought the state into a central government over the strong opposition of many fellow-Virginians but his supporters included General Lee's father. Washington's most skillfully successful supporter was Virginian James Madison, one of the authors of the *Federalist* papers, defining the advantages of the Federal government. Madison's co-author, New York's Alexander Hamilton, influenced Washington with his advocacy of a strong central

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government by the educated, propertied-élite. This type of propertied-élite had controlled the government in Virginia from about 1700 to the Revolution, producing Virginia's "Golden Age," out of which came Virginia's leaders in the Revolution and in the formation of the Republic.

But, after Washington's death, Thomas Jefferson, himself a product of Virginia's landholding governing class, repudiated the whole idea of a propertied élite and introduced government by the people. Becoming one of the most powerful and effective politicians produced on the continent, Jefferson was among the founders of what became *a*, or *the*, Democratic Party. Jefferson was scarely in his grave before a fellow-Southerner, Andrew Jackson, translated "the people" to mean "the mob," and—with the powers of the Supreme Court defined by another Virginian, Chief Justice John Marshall—we suddenly had Hamilton's strong central government run by Jefferson's people.

This highlighted summary is, itself, very much oversimplified. Madison, for example, shifted from the Federalists to Jefferson's party, and "Light Horse Harry" Lee believed that Virginia would not lose her sovereignty by becoming a unit in a central government. Patrick Henry and Benjamin Harrison, both revolutionary leaders and post-Revolutionary governors, perceived that the nature of the national alignment would inevitably lead to the loss of the state's sovereignty, and Harrison wrote his friend Washington a letter quite accurately predicting the future. Yet, in this oversimplification it is immediately apparent that in the greatest era of Virginia's glory—roughly from 1770 to 1820—there was no clear philosophical line, no single vision or attitude, which formed what has become loosely accepted as "the heritage."

Washington and Jefferson held opposing views, as did Marshall and Jefferson, while Lee and Jefferson were the bitterest of enemies. The old-line governing class of the propertied élite was undermined by Jefferson, its power weakened by separation of State and Church, and, with intellectual leadership dead, it came under the domination of the large slave-owners. In 1831, the votes of half-a-dozen fence-sitters in the General Assembly would have abolished slavery in the state; and R. E. Lee, then a young lieutenant at Fort Monroe, wrote that he hoped succeeding assemblies would vote to abolish slavery. Yet, Lee became identified with an alignment of states which represented the last stronghold of human slavery in the civilized world.

For the past century historians have used the statistics available on 18th and 19th Century Virginia to prove any theory which fitted the fashions of the time. Anybody today can take the available statistics and prove almost anything he wants to—*except* a consistent political philosophy among Virginians of the heroic age. Of their day, Jefferson was a cosmopolitan-minded liberal, Washington a national-minded conversative, the Old Guard of the propertied-élite, who lost their battle to keep Virginia (first) out of the Revolution and (second) out of a union, would have been provincial reactionaries—counterparts of the Old Line Republicans of Peter Arno's cartoons during Roosevelt's first two administrations. Virginians' heritage was formed by all of them, although Jefferson, whose philosophy has exerted the least influence in Virginia since 1832, has grown into the most fabled character of the heritage. How do you figure *that* out?

If one would return to the "heritage" without any preconceived theory to prove—return before the solidification began to set in during the 1830's, which led to the stultification of the early 20th Century—he would find the most consistent lines to be vision, vitality and an evolutionary adaptiveness *indigenous to its place and time.*

The evolutionary processes were halted when state leaders, political and financial, committed Virginia after 1820 to the plantation-system based upon slave-labor. This commitment came in an amalgam of vast and complicated issues, and there were many reasons to explain it: I've written them myself. However, though no judgment at all is attached to this fateful turn, as an unadorned fact it marked the end of progressive attitudes.

Edmund Burke, in 1789 in *Reflections on the Revolution in France,* wrote: "Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a state that does not represent its ability as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert, and timid, it can never be safe from the invasion of ability unless is be out of all proportion predominant in the representation."

The point of Burke's statement is that he was writing *in defense of property,* taking a position antithetical to Thomas Jefferson, whose repudiation of his own class was based on the timidity and inertia which became a characteristic of the conservation of property.

Long before the Civil War, Colonel R. E. Lee, of the U.S. Army, deplored the blighting effects of slave-labor, and after the war he wrote that, although he scarcely approved of the way it had come about, he regarded the removal of the slavery system as one benefit that came out of the disaster. Lee specifically is cited here because, as the supreme product of the earlier heritage (a last, late flowering of the Golden Age), his view of his own times carries an authority; but countless lesser known figures spoke out about Virginia's alarming decline in its relative position in the nation.

Today, this period of Virginia's de-

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fensive turn—running as it does into the Confederate period and aftermath—appears in general impressions to form one continuous political, philosophic tradition. The Virginia *character,* with the essential *living* values of the people, has continued through all mutations, and all mutations have contributed to its formation—even as current social changes are causing modifications in the character. But this character was born and received its early conditioning influences when Virginia would have to be considered progressive, economically and politically, judged by its place and time. And it is *this* period, the 150 years from approximately 1640 to the formation of the Republic, that forms the genesis of the great heritage.

For those born too late to know the *experience* of the past which extends their regional memories backward into the great eras, it is vital to the perpetuation of the Virginia character that the generic heritage be placed in its proper perspective in juxtaposition to the defense-formations developed during the nineteenth century national divisions.

Few writers have concentrated more than I on the dislocations imposed upon Virginia by the long aftermath of the Civil War, and on national attitudes which today contribute to a continuation of a vestigial defensiveness. And few writers have gone so far against the prevailing intellectual climate in defense of the priority Virginians gave to perpetuation of their character at a cost in physical adaptiveness. But after reading these articles, written in another "age," I believe we have come upon a time to resume a continuity with the heritage *before* the defensiveness and mutations of the 19th century divisions. I believe we are in a time when the younger generations are able to perceive the generic heritage without the distortions which came between it and today.

The fundamental point of confusion is the concept of plantations, and of plantations as the foundation of an agricultural way of life. Since plantations existed in 1660 as well as in 1860, a false impression is given of a continuity of Virginia's economy, and of political and social attitudes based upon it. It is the supposed "idyll" of the 19th century plantations which makes it almost impossible to conceive of the dynamic operations of the 17th century and early 18th century plantations. Yet, at the heart of the true heritage is the "progressiveness" of the builders of the great plantations.

To refer to Virginia as traditionally agricultural is meaningless. When the republic was founded all America was agricultural, as was most of western Europe. New England had its factories, New York and Philadelphia had their merchants, but farming was the big industry. In Virginia the early plantations were commercial shipping-centers, taking the place of centralized urban centers of commerce and shipping. Each of the big early plantations was a small center of commerce.

The first of the big operators of a plantation as a commercial center was the founder of the Lee line in Virginia: Richard Lee, I, of a family of London merchants, years after his arrival in the Colony, identified himself as "a trader in Virginia." Lee and his contemporaries came up during the commercial revolution, and their vision, energy and adaptiveness to their time and place, were illustrated by their *progressiveness* in introducing commercial methods in settling a wilderness on an unexplored continent. Without any models, they became the world's first merchant-planters.

The biggest of them all, Robert Carter called "King," was born in Virginia after his father, of a family of vintners in London, had established



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a planting-shipping operation at a magnificent water site on the Rappahannock about ten miles from the Bay. At that time, William Byrd, I, operated a successful "store" and fur-trade with the Indians; William Fitzhugh, I, operated a large inland trade with small farmers and engaged heavily in shipping. Robert Carter combined all their operations, making each of his *separate* operations larger than the *main* operation of his predecessors, introduced new operations of his own and combined them all into an *international* commercial-planting-mercantile-shipping operation that made him the richest man in the Colonies. He ran a store, lent money and discounted notes like a bank, imported and exported, trading in every commodity, including Negroes, and operated over 40 separate plantations whose products he shipped from his own wharves.

Personally, he was a hearty eater, a knowledgable drinker of wines, a constant reader, a boatsman and a horseman, a leading educator, the builder of Christ Episcopal Church, and rose to the highest position next only to the Royal Governor in the Colony's government. He was in continual communication with London, where he exerted considerable influence, and gave more personal attention to the liberal arts education of his sons and daughters than any of his contemporaries were known to have done. During his rise to political power, he worked directly with the English government in causing the removal of a Royal Governor who got in his way and, during the 30 years of his power in Colonial government, he was a leader among the governing group who decreased the authority of the Crown in Virginia.

In his time, Robert ("King") Carter was an aggressively progressive citizen, exploiting every avenue possible, improving the "quality" (his favorite word) of everything he touched, and in the vanguard of those who made Virginia the most powerful and influential Colony in the New World.

One glance from the enormous commercial enterprise centered in his plantations to the 19th century slave-operated farms (on which a sawmill or a gristmill represented the height of enterprise) should be enough to distinguish between the heritage left by the progressive merchant-planters who were indigenous to their age, and the planters living on shrinking, inherited land with a dying agricultural system in a world entering the industrial age. The unfortunate interpretations of the heritage usually associate plantations with these rural affairs in the changing age of the 19th century, and the romantic myths tended to view all plantations as slumberous sanctuaries for Old Massa and Little Missy.

In disentangling the true heritage from the defense-formations which came later, a good place to start would be with defining the original plantations, as centers of commerce and shipping, when they were perfectly adapted to a commercial agricultural age. Take a good look at Richard Lee, I, an empire-builder, and "King" Carter, an international financier and dynast, and try to imagine them clinging to attitudes that seem outworn, old-fashioned and countrified. *These* were the makers of the heritage that was progressively adaptive; they dominated the era that formed the continuing Virginia character, and they created "The Golden Age" which produced a climate for greatness.

Nobody could ever accuse them of "looking backward." And since they were prototypes of the Virginia character, I do not believe it would be any more backward looking to view them and their times as guides than to read ancient wisdoms. All required is to see them as they *were* in their time as *it* was, and in that way evaluate what we *are* in our time as *it* is. ■

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What Was Jamestown?

(Continued from page 10)

Britishers prepared for the hardships of this frontier that, by 1610, there were scarce double that number starving on the island, though nearly 1,000 had by then put out from England. Families had already come. A child had been born, Virginia Laydon, whose destiny is lost in the records. Church of England clergymen had shared the hardships and the moralities with their fellows, and a small chapel—in the center of the palisaded fort—was the finest building (though that was saying little at that stage).

It was in 1610 that the British government put more support into the colonization and, though none of the hard-used survivors then suspected it, the corner had been turned. Mortality rates would continue high for decades. The greatest Indian massacre on the Continent (1622) was to give the colony an almost fatal setback—along with wiping out America's first college and first city—and Indians were to harry the frontier families for generations. Yet, the chart of the population continued upward and, around the center of the capital at Jamestown, the nucleus of a great colony grew along the banks of the rivers in an ever-westward expansion.

Governors came and went, cavaliers came and were absorbed, dandies perished and ambitious men carved personal domains out of the wilderness, and the dream brought to Jamestown spread through the almost limitless frontier of Virginia, which then extended to the Mississippi and the Great Lakes. Though in the early days some individuals had come looking for new gold (as the Spaniards found it in Mexico and South America), the dream that prevailed was essentially for a home in a new world, with all that implied of new hope and new horizons.

FORLORN AND REMOTE

As the colonists first saw their new homesite, they sailed up the broad, tidal river enclosed by primeval forests that rose on both banks like green palisades. The island, chosen for its facilities for mooring ocean-going boats, was not a healthy place by nature, and the Indians did nothing to make it more healthful. At night, as the city-bred people 3,000 miles from home accustomed themselves to the rustling of unseen animals and the howling of wolves, their dream must have seemed forlorn and remote. That they never lost it is the ultimate tribute to the courage of those men and women who survived all hazards that a new homeplace might be erected on earth, to which millions of others from all nations would come to seek and find their own sanctuaries.

Those first, whose unmarked graves in the swampy earth make Jamestown Island a hallowed land, represented a cross section of the society of their time. Through the blending of all the elements within the frame of the dream, a new society grew to characterize the new world they founded. •

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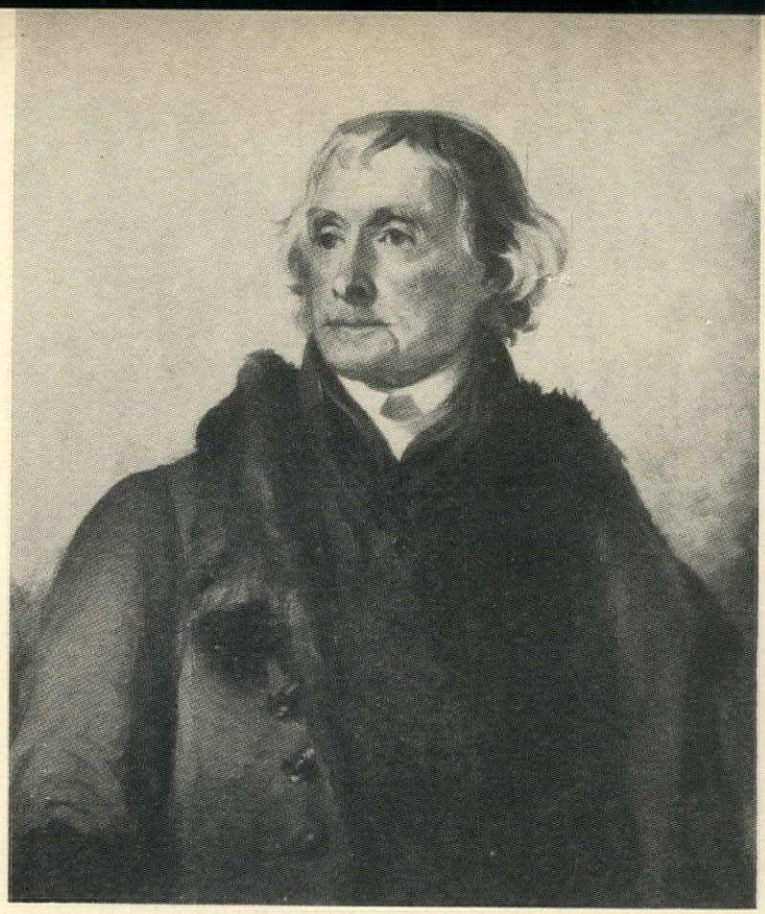
Fort Monroe . . .

(Continued from page 19)

masses, an observation balloon was launched from a ship—in a curiously ignored preview of modern war.

Trying to nullify the fort they could not take, the Confederates launched the world's first ironclad—the *Merrimac-Virginia*—in order to hold the wooden ships of the US Navy at their base. But a Swedish inventor had managed to prevail over Washington's naval brass of that day and come up with a rival ironclad, the *Monitor*. The two sea-monsters—quite as terrifying in their day as is the thought of intercontinental missiles in ours—fought it out to a tactical draw, which amounted to a strategic loss for the Confederacy, before McClellan's awed foot-soldiers in the fort.

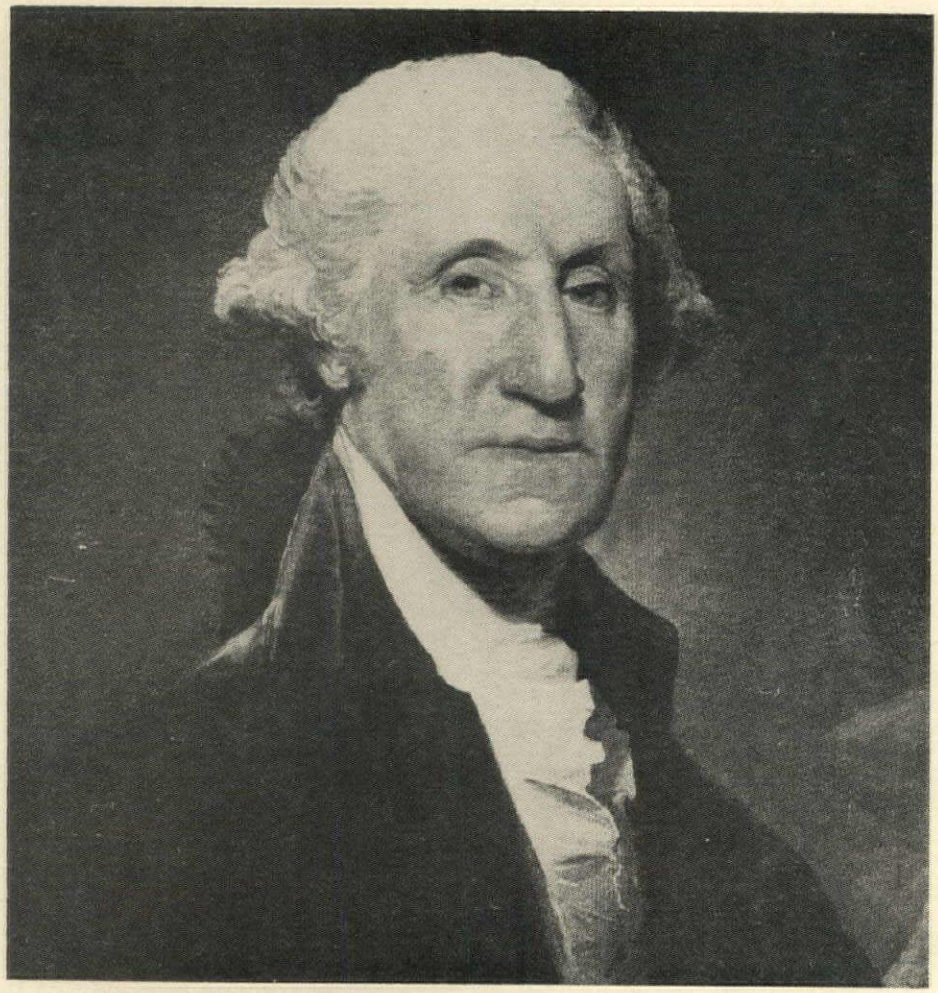
Later, in the climatic year of 1864, the base of the fort made it possible for Butler to attack the Richmond area south of the James, simultaneous with Grant's attack from the North, and also to make safe Grant's crossing of the James to join Butler. In summary, the loss of Fort Monroe on the Confederacy's border enabled the enemy to operate more effectively within the defender's territory than did the defender.



RIGHT:
Thomas Jefferson
(Portrait by Sully)

AND

BELOW:
George Washington
(Gilbert Stuart's Portrait)



It was after the fighting phase of the Civil War and during the Occupation that the fort occupied the historical place for which it is generally most known today. This was as the prison of Jefferson Davis. The Confederate president, of course, had nothing to do with the assassination of Lincoln (indeed, Davis regarded Lincoln's death as a calamity), and it is not likely that the Reconstruction powers in Washington seriously believed that he did. But they were a vindictive, conscienceless crew, and Davis was a handy victim on whom they could pin the crime. Or, in another way, Lincoln's murder was a handy crime to pin on Davis. In any event, shackled with leg-irons like a dangerous felon, the sickly man in his late fifties was imprisoned in one of the fort's casemates.

A casemate is a passageway one-room wide and two-rooms deep that runs under the ramparts, at ground level, from the outer walls of the fort to the inner walls facing the parade ground. The entrance to the casemate from the interior of the fort presents a pleasing facade of white-paneled door and two windows in a redbrick wall that suggests an interior of a romantic nineteenth century atmosphere—which indeed, under some circumstances, it contained.

Inside the apartment is divided into two rooms by a broad chimney, with fireplaces front and back, and an

(Please turn the page)

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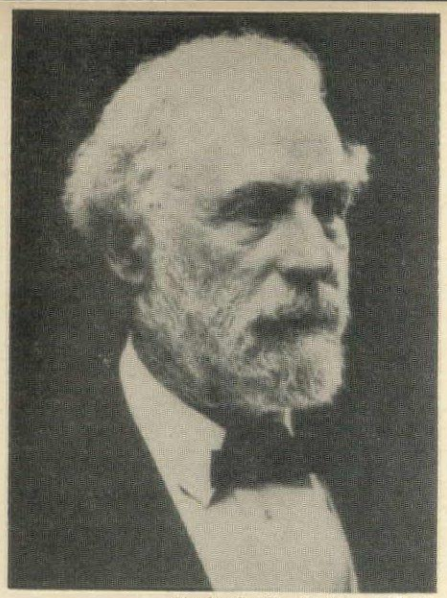
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One of the last portraits of Robert E. Lee

arched doorway on either side. The room to the outside is walled by the thick masonry of the fort's exterior, which is cut through by a narrow window. This window overlooks the wide moat of tidal water, and the high, sloping face of the wall on the far side of the moat.

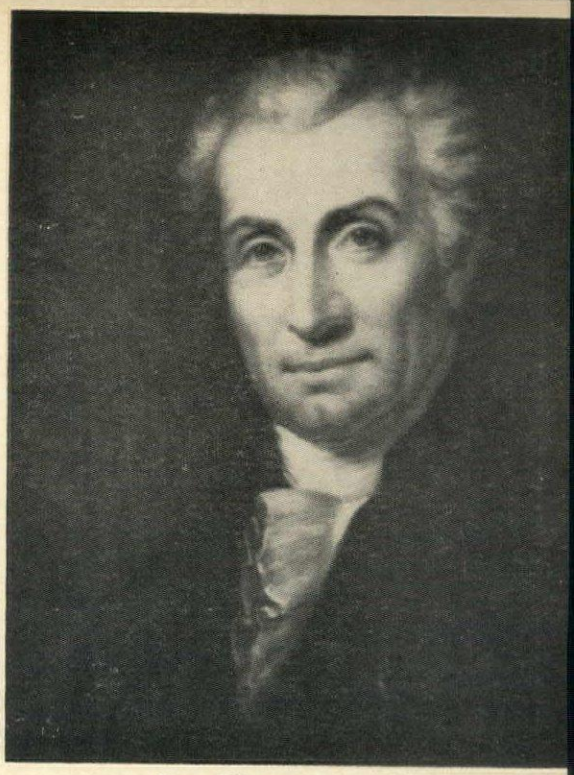
Generally the casemates were used for the storage of armaments and ammunition, and served as bachelor officer-quarters; in the event of a close-up attack from an enemy land-force, the outer windows would serve as gun embrasures. In all ways the casemates were utilitarian and, though damp, in some ways quite cozy. For the unfortunate gentleman who had served as president of the Confederacy, Casemate #2 was in his day a cell in which a man of honor paid the price of a principle and is in our day a grim reminder of the hate and vengefulness involved in the internecinea war that too frequently comes across to us as a humanitarian crusade.

When Mr. Davis was imprisoned in the outer room, facing the sixty-foot wide moat and the waters of the bay beyond, the casemate was stripped down to an iron bunk, a table and a chair, and a portable stool-closet. A candle burned on the table all night. Two sentries remained in the room at all hours, two more guarded the doorways between the rooms, and an officer remained in the inside room with orders to check the desperate criminal every fifteen minutes.

The door to the outside was locked on the outside, where a row of sentries stood ready to repel any effort to effect the former president's escape. Another row paraded up and down on the ramparts over his head, and a third row was posted across the moat on the counterscarps facing the casemate. With the heavy guns on the ramparts, the array looked as if the Reconstruction government expected the ghosts, of Lee's army to arise and re-begin the war; indeed, if Lee had had as many healthy men at Appomattox, the war might not have ended.

Ill and despondent when committed in May, 1865, anxious about his wife and children, Jefferson Davis nevertheless put on a brave front. Mr. Davis' formal dignity was offensive to General Miles, a young war hero who was placed in charge of the "desperado," and he did his part toward the restoration of the Union by placing leg-irons on the man whose pride would not break and subjecting him to physical indignities that, if continuing, would doubtless have resulted in the prisoner's death.

Fortunately for the honor of the U. S., the Chief Medical Officer at Fort Monroe happened to be first of all a dedicated physican and, along with his humanitarianism, a man of historic perspective. Dr. John Joseph Craven, of Newark, New Jersey, had crowded a wide variety of experiences into his forty-three years, and, as only a war-time colonel, he was more interested in the physical and mental health of the former president than in pleasing his military superiors. In fact, he pleased them so little that in December, 1865, he was taken off the case and a month later mustered out of service.



James Monroe

However, his six months with the famous patient led to the restoration of Mr. Davis' health and ultimately to a greater freedom and more humane treatment for the prisoner, Jefferson Davis was moved from the damp casemate to more congenial quarters in Carroll Hall, where his wife was later permitted to join him. His ultimate release two years later, when the most cruel enemies of the fallen South could no longer sustain the illusion of a "case" against him, was unrelated to Dr Craven, but to the diary of this courageous Northerner we are indebted for the insights of the prison life of Jefferson Davis.

An inveterate reader, he was permitted only the Episcopal Prayer Book until Dr. Craven obtained books for him. Accustomed to exercise and eager to regain his health, he could take only the few steps back and forth across

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his cell under the cold eyes of the sentries. For companionship, he tamed a mouse. It is a sad story, recounted by one man of moral courage of another, and true humanity was exchanged in Casemate #2 between gentlemen who shared a respect for the inviolable dignity of the spirit across all lines.

Today from the Chamberlin (successor to the old Hygeia), you walk a romantic foot-path where Poe might have walked, cross the tidal waters of the moat on a foot-bridge in the section where young Lieutenant Lee worked on the escarpments, pass through an open casemate to the inside of the fort, facing the parade-ground and quarters—where Lincoln and Grant walked, as well as Lee and Davis—and you come to the vine-covered casemate which contained the ghost of the Confederate dream.

You feel the presence of the past there, not as something remotely remembered but, as the officers there now feel it, as the continuity of time and the overlapping of generations. One of the army commissioners who worked with General Bernard in 1819 was Col. Walker Armistead, whose son, General Lewis Armistead, was mortally wounded at the crest of Pickett's Charge. George Pickett himself, as a young captain, was reading under a beach umbrella on the sand when seen by the girl who fell in love with and later married him.

In its more strictly military history as a fort, the first artillery school was established there in 1824 and continued, with interruptions, until supplanted by the Coast Artillery School, established in 1907. To those of us who remember Sunday School picnics to nearby Buckroe Beach in the innocent years of the century, Fort Monroe is probably most remembered for the Coast Artillery, whose big guns in target practice thrilled the children. It was not until 1946 that the Coast Artillery School was moved to provide a place for—what was then called—the Army Ground Forces Headquarters.

It was also around this time that the post office was finally prevailed upon to follow an army directive of *1832* making the name officially Fort Monroe, and not as usually called Fortress Monroe. Apparently, so the army people say, a fortress is a fortified civilian community. Fort or fortress, the post was always liked by army personnel, from Lee to the cluster of general officers who plan our continental safety today on the same spot where a few men stood 350 years for the same purpose.

With summer coming and the open season for trips, there is no more enchanting spot than this area that used to be generally called Old Point Comfort. Looking out on the waters where the three ships that landed at Jamestown sailed into Hampton Roads, you stand where the origins of America cross with the pattern of tomorrow—and you feel a sense of that historic perspective that places our moment on earth in the comforting stream of God's time. ◄

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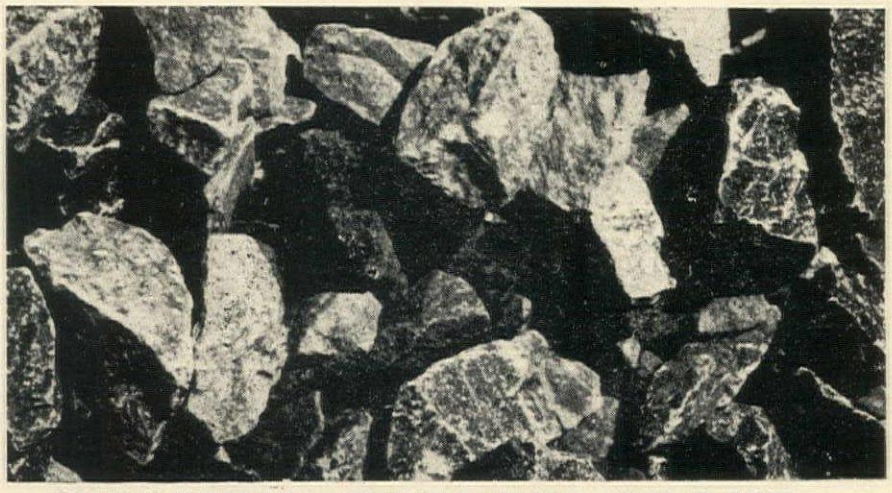
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James Monroe *(from page 28)*

In this context, for Washington and Hamilton to recommend a twenty-year-old as a "sensible" *man* was to them just about the highest compliment they could pay. Considering that they were recommending what today would be a youth for responsible assignments in a revolutionary movement (and that Jefferson gave him an assignment), Monroe's older contemporaries obviously recognized in him the qualities of real stature.

Placing the adjective "sensible" in its background, and completing the commendatory phrase with "brave and active" (or, as we would say, "courage and initiative"), we can see James Monroe as his fellows on earth saw him, and, as they said in the Old West, "*this* was a man."

This is not a man whose eccentricities make amusing stories, who will be remembered for a sudden phrase or extravagant gesture. He has no particular gift for words and no flare for dramatic moments. He was very self-contained, a quiet sort of person, forthright in his speech and in his actions, with an unyielding sense of personal honor. When Alexander Hamilton, his early supporter, later became his enemy, Monroe challenged him to a duel. Since the duel did not come off, there is no aura of romantic violence about him. But you can read his letter to Hamilton and encounter a very resolute character, of whom "sensible" would mean there was no foolishness about him.

However, the very inwardness of Monroe's strengths do not lend themselves to legend. They were strengths that inspired confidence in others and attracted powerful leaders to him, and they were the strengths that the nation needed for solid accomplishments during its fumbling, formative stages. As history is seen by a series of pinnacles, Monroe's were the quiet strengths that could be cast in the shadows by Jefferson's rare brilliance and remain unheard under the tumult brought into the American stream by Andrew Jackson's mob. When history is properly regarded in its continuity as a stream, it is manifestly inaccurate to label a highly effectual patriot as dull by *contrasting* him with the spectacular. There is no reason to label him as the opposite of what he was not.

In no field of life does the absence of one condition indicate the presence of the opposite. For a thing not to be white it needn't be black; it can be mauve or puce. Not to be rich does not mean poverty, not to be scholarly does

(Please turn the page)

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(From preceding page)

not mean ignorant, not to be athletic does not mean puny. In our century, no one is called poor because he is not a Rockefeller. But in Monroe's background, as in his career, he was also labeled for the opposite of what he was not. Since his immediate family did not belong in the ruling powers of the day, the handy designation was "plain."

Non-Virginia writers on the state have accepted the myth by which Virginians interpret their past and have perpetuated a mythical social structure which was supposed to consist entirely of "patricians" and "plebeans." Curiously, there is nothing whatsoever in the recorded history of the state to support such a nonsensical theory.

The men whose ambition, energy and resourcefulness had won positions of Colonial power for their families by the mid-18th century came by and large from the same British strata of those who did not make a big splash or, emigrating to the Colonies later, were later in winning these privileged positions. But the fact that one wave of emigrants had succeeded in establishing their families in conditions of impressive style, while the succeeding waves were on their way up, should not imply any aura of the patrician to the first Rockefellers while stamping as "plain" those families of substance, education and good manners who had not then made a killing out of land speculation and slave-labor.

Many families of fine background never produced a single member with the greed to acquire a large fortune, and surely, with centuries of perpetuity in England and Virginia, such unspectacular gentle folk could scarcely be designated as plain. Yet, they were never among the powers; they never desired to be, any more than segments of gentle people today aspire to great wealth and political control. Thus, it was no traditional status of aristocrat that set apart the grandees of the Northern Neck from the families who lived more modestly, and when James Monroe was born in Westmoreland County it is also most unlikely that his people considered themselves "plain" in comparison to the owners of the big estates.

Historians of varying degree make their obeisance to the plantations with fabled names, and assume that everybody else in the neighborhood lived, like the peasants around the old Rhine castles, in humble subjugation to the baron—or, here, "old Massa." Letters of the times do not bear this out at all. Countless inhabitants of those places of

"conspicuous consumption" were referred to as bores and ignoramuses, and even less deference was accorded to stupid oafs because of their family connections than it is today. The times were dynamic when men of dynamism were needed, and fat livers off an early pirate's gains were too flabby to be of any use.

The big man of action, Washington, and the big man of ideas, Jefferson, were lean people, hard and supple. Washington began life as a surveyor, as did the younger Jefferson's father, but this should not imply that they were "plain" in comparison to some elegant nothing who was content to gamble away the money earned by an earlier Indian trader. The times were in flux, with nothing of the static quality—the rigid division of classes—that has been palmed off as history. In point of fact, James Monroe came of a background of interesting people and, at least on one side, of very substantial people, and no recorded line of Monroe's nor any recorded fact about him indicate any awareness of any struggle with a social handicap.

JAMES MONROE
PART II
(From April, 1958)

James Monroe's maternal grandfather was a successful "undertaker in architecture"—a term, having no association with embalming dead people (the undertaking profession as such had not been introduced in Virginia), which meant loosely the owner's representative in the construction of a house or building. It would be close to our contracting architect, the professional man responsible for a structure meeting the owner's specification.

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His name was James Jones, and an indication of his general status can be found in his children.

His son Joseph, a lawyer, became a Judge of the Virginia General Court, a member of the powerful Committee of Safety and a member of the Continental Congress, and he was an intimate of George Washington. Though his home bore no heraldic associations, he was a man of means and influence; his letters show him to be learned, astute, and worldly wise; and young James Monroe—if not exactly fortune's darling—was certainly favored by fortune in having such an uncle as his mentor and guide.

Judge Jones' sister, Monroe's mother, was said to be one of the best educated women of her day (this, when Jefferson's Randolph mother signed her name with an X) and probably had more ambition for her son than if she had inherited acres instead of learning. It is interesting to speculate on the possibility of Miss Jones meeting her future husband, Spence Monroe, through the professional world of her father.

Spence Monroe, a somewhat shadowy figure, began his working life as a "carpenter," and perhaps these beginnings as an artisan had something to do with history's appellation of "plain." But these designations of the 18th Century carried nothing of the specific status of our day. As in our time everyone working for a bank, from janitor to president, is said to be "with the bank," so a carpenter could be anything from a skilled laborer to a building contractor. The Cary architects of Williamsburg, for instance, were listed a carpenters.

At some time in his youth, Spence Monroe apprenticed himself to a "joyner"—the class of men who produced the magnificent interiors of the Colonial houses. They were benchworkers in contrast to field workers, highly trained craftsmen who created the mouldings, the staircases and arches, and frequently joyner and architect were synonymous. As doctors and lawyers usually learned their professions by apprenticing themselves to established practitioners, so Monroe's father followed the custom in apprenticing himself to an architect. But while the poorly trained doctors of that day could, as the saying goes, "bury their mistakes," the architect could not; and judging by the monuments of 18th century architecture in Virginia, the successful architects set a standard of high talent.

At all events, Spence Monroe entered a competitive field whose professional men made one of the most distinctive and lasting contributions to the culture of the state, and married the daughter of a professional man who in the Old World would be called a Master Builder. Thus James Monroe, through his father and grandfather, was born into the proud clan of builders, and grew up amongst kinspeople who were quite literally the builders of Virginia, and of America.

They were ambitious people in a society that was still partly frontier, with all the expansiveness and oppor-

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tunities characteristic of a community in the process of rapidly changing growth. Happily unaware of the labels that history would have for them, Monroe's family early started the boy on an education to fit him for a place among the colony's leaders. He went to Parson Campbell's famous school in Westmoreland County, walking miles through a virgin forest, with books under one arm and a rifle under the other. In his last year at the school, his companion on the long walks was John Marshall, slightly older but his fast friend.

Perhaps his long, lonely walks (before he was joined by young Marshall) developed Monroe's serious-mindedness and his gift for silence. The woods walks certainly developed his sinewy frame, as the tall man remained a rawboned type, like a frontiersman. His eyes had the steady stillness of a frontiersman too, and he was a crack shot with any weapon. Most certainly Parson Campbell found in him the native material to be moulded according to the character of the school: with an education based on the solid grounding of Latin and mathematics, always the durable virtues of mankind were stressed—honor and honesty, self-discipline and self-reliance. When Monroe finished the school at sixteen, in his own person he exemplified the qualities of which Parson Campbell was proud, and he needed no old school tie to identify him as the product of the best in the Colony's school system.

He entered William and Mary in 1774, when the tumult that preceded the Revolution began to flare in the streets of Williamsburg. If James Monroe suffered bad timing for his place in history, few young men ever enjoyed better timing for their place in the events themselves. The founders of William and Mary had placed the college in the Capital, in order that the students — almost all of whom had grown up in isolated plantation communities—might be in a "cosmopolitan" atmosphere at the seat of government, commerce and urban fashion. Though it never occurred to the founders that their colonial capital would also be the seat of revolution, the scene of the overthrow of the British government, Monroe's student days were spent in the midst of riotous events that were to change the course of world history. This circumstance characterized a career in which he always sought and usually found himself at the center of the crucial events in the building of a new nation.

He remained in the college two years, until he was 18 in 1776. Nothing significant is known about his life at William and Mary, but what was significant was his known activities in student militia companies and his early assumption of leadership. In the summer of 1776, when the sporadic fighting in the North began to settle down in earnest and, with the Declaration of Independence, the Colonies finally accepted a state of war with the Mother Country, James Monroe was commissioned lieutenant in the 3rd Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line and marched off with his company to join

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Washington's forces.

In one of America's most epochal episodes, Washington's winternight crossing of the Delaware, the 18-year-old Virginia lieutenant led his platoon in a crucial charge of a gun battery which commanded a Trenton street. In falling wounded as the guns were silenced, young Monroe kept his first date with destiny by an action cited for its gallantry. The attention of the army's commander-in-chief, George Washington, had already been directed to his young fellow Virginian by Monroe's uncle, and from Trenton on Washington actively interested himself in the career of his friend's nephew.

Less than two years later, whilst but twenty years of age and in the period when he would have normally been graduating from college, Monroe felt that he had completed his apprenticeship in the world of affairs, and was restlessly eager to mount his own career. It was at this time that the future statesman impressively showed himself to be, in the full 18th century meaning, "a man of good sense."

It was a time when the army was idling in camp, and Monroe—as major and aide-de-camp of General Lord Stirling—was partaking of the high life that His Lordship provided for his official family at his nearby estate. Thrown into intimate contact with influential men of fashion and lovely ladies, Monroe was offered avenues of advancement as well as an interlude of elegant pleasure that the most serious-minded young man would have savored—and his correspondence of the period showed him to be far from a sobersides. But the theatre of war was shifting to the South and, showing a fine eye for the main course of destiny, Monroe (forsaking the easy opportunities and the beguiling luxuries) sought an assignment in the center of events.

Armed with the warm recommendations of Washington and Hamilton, Monroe returned to Williamsburg, and there came the turn in his career that tried the steel of the man. The war had thrown Virginia into a chaotic condition, and Monroe found it impossible to find action in the center of events. He was commissioned lieutenant-colonel of state militia but (though this discouraging fact little equates with the legends) Virginians who wanted to fight the enemy were hard to come by. There were Virginia regiments of good soldiers off with Washington and some stout individuals off in the Carolinas, but at home Monroe and other officers could muster no

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troops. It was a trying time for an ambitious young man seeking the path of destiny, and he did that hardest of all things—nothing. Caught in a calm, he stood still, and waited for the wind.

The wind came in the lanky form of sandy-haired Tom Jefferson, governor at thirty-six, the strong man of the state and the coming power of the new nation. He saw in, then, twenty-one-year-old Monroe a wiry build like his own—a war-hardened man built for energy and durability—with the steady eyes of serious purpose and the resolute face of a person who would not be diverted from that purpose. Indeed, Monroe's serious-mindedness would appeal of all people to Thomas Jefferson, who never told a joke in his life. Governor Jefferson appointed the war veteran his military aide and generously offered to instruct him in law (naturally with a new system which Jefferson had devised).

Shortly after the association began, the capital was moved to the new, raw "city" of Richmond, and Monroe seemed somewhat hesitant about leaving Williamsburg to cast his lot entirely with Jefferson. He wrote his practical uncle, Joseph Jones, for advice, and he was "sensible" enough to follow it. His mentor, accurately forseeing Jefferson's future, advised his nephew, in effect, "to hitch his wagon to a star."

Having shown the strength of character to wait for the path of destiny to open, young Monroe had the wisdom to follow it when it opened and the ability to go all the way with it. The path took him twice to Richmond as governor, repeatedly to the capitals of Europe as minister and commissioner, to Washington as secretary of state and of war, as president for two terms, and finally—along with a law practice in Fredericksburg—to reversing his family's profession of builders by himself having built the estate house in Loudoun County.

It is not likely that any facts will ever change the impressions created by the frequently false simplifications of history—such as Lincoln, The Great Emancipator—but, at least it can be hoped that Virginians will know their own people for what they were and not by the labels pasted on their memories by the arrangers of history for the purpose of convenience or special pleading. •

RE . . . G. Watson James' article "The Huguenot Trail" (June issue) Mr. Reid Dunn, Richmond reports that L. W. Reeds should have been L. W. Reid who was his, Mr. Dunn's grandfather.

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Va. Farmer . . .

(Continued from page 15)

I reminded him (since he was a contemporary of mine in high school) of his visits to his kinspeople on the farm, and suggested that he imagine that farm with the practical help of no more than five field-hands (to make the money-crop of tobacco) and the added luxury of a few older slaves and children to assist in the house-work. With that vision, my friend exclaimed that the most modest plantation would have indeed maintained its own expansive comfort, sense of privilege, and a true dignity in meeting the terms of life.

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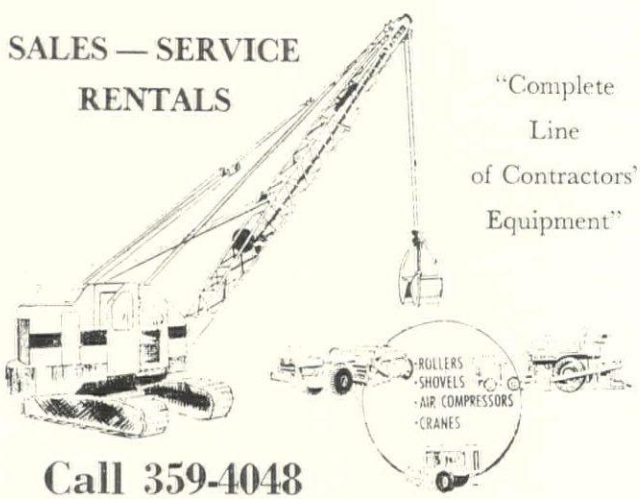
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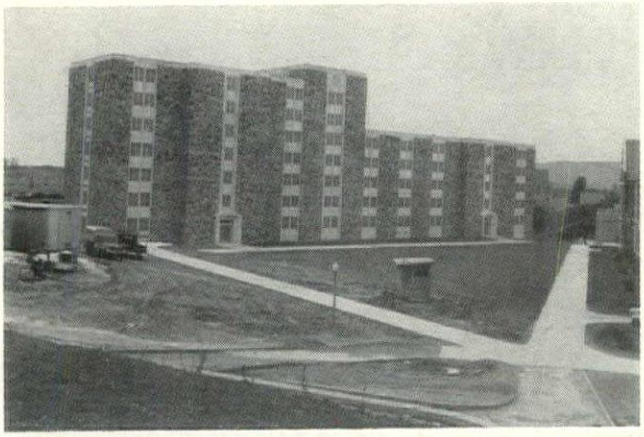
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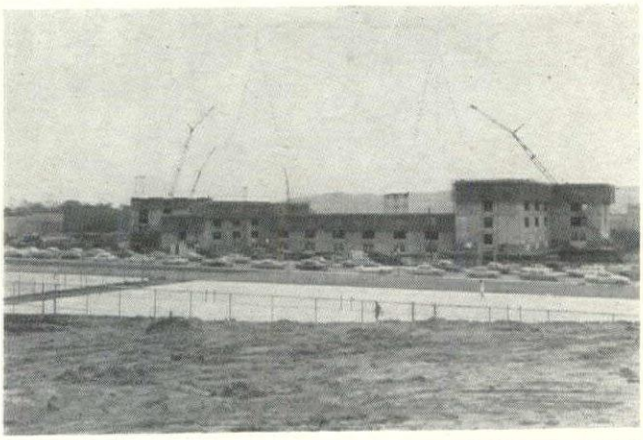
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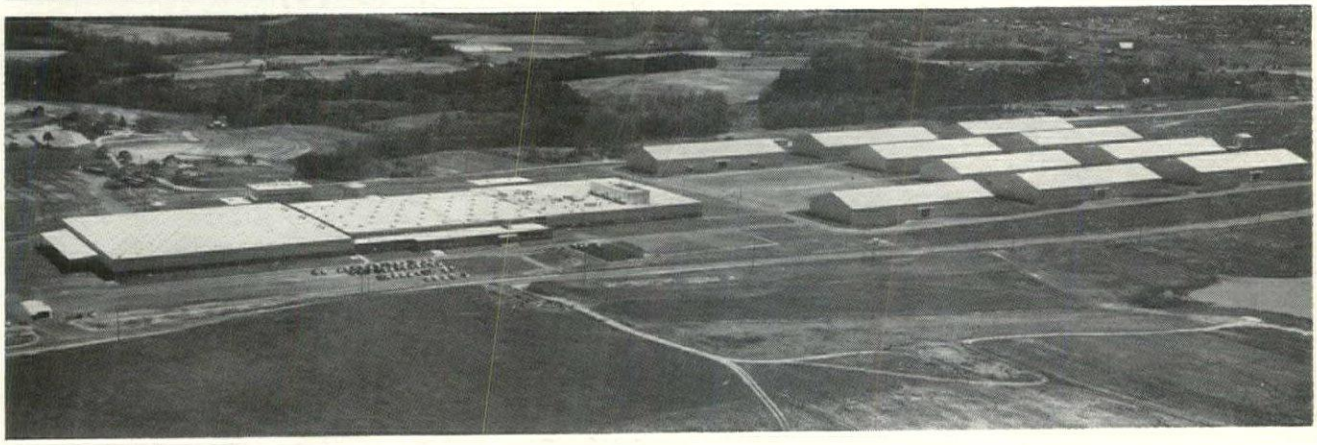
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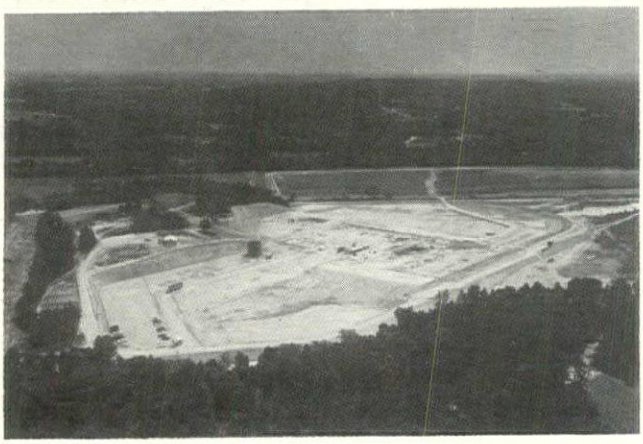
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